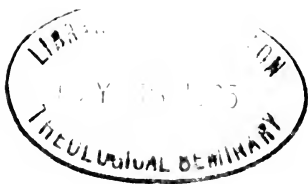


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THE
RITES AND WORSHIP
OF
THE JEWS

By
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PREFACE.

‘THE New Testament is hidden in the Old ; the Old is made clear in the New.’ In the light of this deep saying of Augustine, the modern study of the Old Testament is largely and wisely conducted ; especially of those parts which have to do with the institutes of Worship and Sacrifice. An accurate acquaintance with these institutes, especially as they stand recorded in the antique and often perplexing book of Leviticus, will throw much light on the teachings of the New Covenant, and will perhaps save the thoughtful student from many mistakes. In particular, he will be able to consider for himself the extraordinary hypotheses that the national life of Israel was developed and consolidated without the Law, and that the account of the Tabernacle and its worship is ‘merely an ideal picture of the Babylonian exiles, a reflection of Solomon’s Temple projected backwards by a vivid fancy upon the distant canvas of Hebrew mythology.’ To examine these theories is in no way the purpose of the present volume ; the reader will find the question amply discussed in more directly controversial works.¹ It will be sufficient for the end now in view, if a careful and accurate exposition of the Levitical ordinances shall incidentally disclose the harmony of the system with the state of things in which it professedly had its origin, and its consistency, as standing in the forefront of Israel’s history, with all subsequent developments of the

¹ Among the briefer recent discussions of the subject may be mentioned *The Genuineness of the Pentateuch*, by the Rev. R. Wheler Bush, M.A., and *The Mosaic Authorship and Credibility of the Pentateuch*, by the Dean of Canterbury (No. 15, Present Day Tracts).

national life. The reader will with new assurance accept the declaration that the LORD spake by Moses, and that the 'pattern of things in the heavens' was verily showed to the great Lawgiver 'in the Mount.'

It will be observed that the nation is spoken of here, as in the other volumes of the series, under the appellation of 'The Jews.' To insist upon retaining the name 'Israel' or 'Israelites' until the time of the national disruption, would have seemed to affect a needless precision; and the retention of the popular term will cause no confusion in any reader's mind.

The volume has been mainly prepared by the author of the companion work on *The Laws and Polity of the Jews*, whose filial relation with the late Dr. Edersheim has made available the stores of Jewish erudition possessed by that lamented scholar. Considerable use has also been made of Bishop Haneberg's *Religiöse Alterthümer der Bibel* (Munich 1869), as well as of other standard authorities, English and German.

56, PATERNOSTER ROW,

1890.

INTRODUCTORY.



THE religious life of a nation will naturally vary according to the nation's surroundings, for these leave their impress deep on the national worship. The more ancient this worship, the more clearly shall we trace the simple and unpolished character of the society in which it originated, bringing the primitiveness of the original religion into marked contrast with the super-refined, so to speak, cavilling creed of later days. Thus it is with Judaism. Place Abraham, the father of the faithful, side by side with a Rabbi of the first or second century; contrast the simple faith and implicit obedience of the Patriarch with the reported utterances, the Scriptural interpretations, the marvellous deeds of an Akiba, a Jochanan, even a Hillel; the same creed is scarcely recognisable. And yet it is the same. There are the same great foundation truths of the Unity of God, of a Revelation to man, of the Election of Israel, of its special relationship to God. In this book it will be our endeavour, by delineating the essential features of primitive Jewish worship, to show how, through all the changing scenes of its political life, the religion of Israel remained ever the same, and will remain ever essentially the same, in so far as it follows its real destiny, summed up in these words of Moses: 'Jehovah shall establish thee for a holy people unto Himself . . . if thou shalt keep the commandments of Jehovah thy God, and walk in His ways. And all the peoples of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of Jehovah; and they shall be afraid of thee.'¹

¹ Deut. xxviii. 9, 10.

Going back to the origins of the Jewish religion, we find it first, having even then been handed down from remote antiquity, centred in the family worship of one man, Abraham. Naturally, his beliefs formed the rule of conduct to his household. For himself, a native of Mesopotamia, accustomed to trace the Divine in Nature, to look upon the stars and sands as having special signification as regarded his own progeny,¹ it seemed not strange that his migration into the land of Canaan was in every step directed by God.² Wherever he pitched his tent, there he erected an altar, so that his journey throughout the land was, in one sense, a protest against heathenism. In how far Abraham differed from his neighbours it is impossible to say. Tradition represents him as undergoing a fiery ordeal for his faith even in his own father's house. But on this the Bible is silent. The faith of Abraham was sufficient; 'he believed in Jehovah, and He counted it to him for righteousness.'³ Still, the repeatedly uttered assurances of God's favour and guidance which Abraham seems to have required,⁴ show that much was yet needed before his family could take up the position of 'a light to lighten the nations.' That Isaac and Jacob added little to what Abraham had already done, is evident. The next stage is, therefore, the Descent into Egypt; and this will bring us up to the time of Moses and his laws, the foundation stone and keynote of the Jewish creed and people.

Of the form of worship during the bondage in Egypt, we know very little. We read of the children of Israel crying to Jehovah,⁵ and from the wording of the Fourth Commandment, 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,' it has been reasonably enough argued that they at any rate had some acquaintance with this world-old ordinance.⁶ Further, circumcision was probably practised, though not very rigidly enforced. Thus, even Moses himself neglected to administer the rite to

¹ Gen. xv. 5. ² Gen. xiii. 17. ³ Gen. xv. 6.

⁴ Gen. xii. 7; xiii. 14; xv. 1; xvii. 1; xxi. 12; xxii. 15-18.

⁵ Exod. ii. 23.

⁶ See below: part III., ch. i.

his son.¹ It is highly probable, notwithstanding the fact that the Israelites were located in a special part of Egypt, that the nation was to a great extent influenced by the magnificent Egyptian worship around. Whether or not the worship of the Golden Calf was taken from Egypt, as many authorities seem to think, or was of more ancient origin than the sojourn in Egypt, is still an open question. But certain it is, that the worship of the Israelites in the Desert of the Exodus was very far from pure; and that they copied rites, and accordingly brought down judgment on themselves, from such people as the Midianites and the desert tribes.

Two passages in the later Scriptures cast much reflex light on the religious condition of the Israelites in the wilderness. One is in the Book of Jeremiah, vii. 22, 23, 'I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices; but this thing commanded I them, saying, Hearken unto my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.' This cannot be taken to mean, as some read the passage, that no laws concerning ritual were given by God to Israel; seeing that the prophet himself repeatedly recognizes the existence of such laws,² but plainly intimates two things, first, that the law which was the basis of Israel's life—the Ten Words—contained no reference to sacrifice; and secondly, that the moral must always rank above the ceremonial. Sacrifices were commanded not for their own sake, but as means and helps to holiness, apart from which they were worthless. The other passage is in the book of Amos, quoted in Stephen's address to the Sanhedrin:³ 'Did ye bring unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? Yea, ye have borne Siccuth

¹ Exod. iv. 25, 26.

² See vi. 20; vii. 21; xiv. 12; xvii. 26; xxxiii. 18. Compare also the testimony of the earlier prophets, Hosea, Amos, Isaiah.

³ Amos v. 25, 26, R.V.; Acts vii. 42, 43.

your king and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves.' This passage plainly intimates first, that 'sacrifices and offerings' to Jehovah were ordained in the wilderness; else wherefore the impiety of withholding them? and secondly, that the offerings were so neglected or intermingled with heathen observances as to enstamp the people with the character of idolaters at that early period of their history—a character which their descendants had only too fatally maintained.

The further words of Jehovah in the book of Ezekiel (xx. 25): 'I gave them statutes that were not good, and judgments wherein they should not live,' are to be interpreted, not of the law in its death-bringing character,¹ but of the institutes and observances of idolatry to which God in His righteous displeasure left the people, to punish their unfaithfulness. This part of the Divine dealing with them was in fact a step to their recovery. Left to discover the evil consequences of departing from Jehovah, they were chastened and humbled, that they might return to Him.

The immediate effect of establishing a national worship, or what was to serve as such in future days, was most striking. Called upon to contribute towards the erection of a central place of worship, each person 'willing-hearted, brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold,'² not to speak of linen, skins, silver, and brass. It seemed as though now the children of Israel had found a point round which they could rally, an object which they could all delight to further. And during the months that the Tabernacle was in rearing there were no judgments visiting a disobedient people, no craving for what was sinful or unlawful. Directly it was completed, the children of Israel seem to have lost sight of its meaning, and relapsed into murmuring and profanity.³ So difficult is it for a nation, even an Israel, to live up always to the ideal set before them.

¹ Romans vii. 10, and kindred passages, are wrongly quoted as sustaining this view.

² Exod. xxxv. 22.

³ Lev. x.; Numb. xi.

This Tabernacle : what was it like? The question has been answered in many ways, and very differently also. According to some, it was a most spacious and gorgeous building, fit to be the dwelling of the King, the LORD of Hosts. Others again, and more truly, take it to have been the type and picture of the 'tabernacling among men' of Christ,¹ and therefore imagine it as plain, unadorned, a building that would be called paltry and poor in these days. The truth lies between the two extremes. The Tabernacle was certainly a tent, and meant to be temporary. But it was a tent which carried with it the idea of being established for ever. Its corners were square, like those of a house ; and it was beautifully adorned with gold, silver, gifts, to the very best of what the children of Israel possessed. It was a tent, inasmuch as the Desert of Sinai was not their rest ; it was also a house, a dwelling, because 'the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them.'² So, without, all was plain and tent-like ; within, all was beauty and glory. Not in the Temple of Solomon, nor in the Temple of Herod, gorgeous as it was, was there aught of holy beyond what had been shown to Moses in the Mount.

Of course, all was on a very small scale. The Israelites were never very famous for their skill in workmanship, or handicraft of any kind. Some hundreds of years later, we find them obliged to go to their neighbours and enemies, the Philistines, for blacksmith's work. Indeed, the genius of the nation, and the tendency of the Mosaic code, lay all in the opposite direction. Israel could only be kept pure by not coming into contact with other nations. It was a contrast ; a 'peculiar people,' whose mission was not to proselytise, but to keep itself aloof from the heathen world around it. Proselytes were always looked upon with suspicion ; and the story of the perpetual bondage of the Gibeonites probably deterred many of the Canaanitish tribes from joining the victorious Israelitish army. To the heathen world the Jew was always a mysterious

¹ John i. 14.

² Rev. xxi. 3.

undesirable being, one who loved his brother-neighbour, and hated his enemy. In short, the world was for the Jew, not the Jew for the world. And thus, in process of time, when the nation had fulfilled its destiny, this exclusiveness, so necessary for its life in the beginning of its history, was so perverted in the end as to become its death.

The meaning and import of the Tabernacle appears clearly in the Pentateuch. Here, and elsewhere throughout the Old Testament, it could be read under its different names. Very frequently it was called *ohel*, a tent, generally in combination with other words.¹

In its earliest form, before the construction of *the* Tabernacle, it is described as *ohel moed*, the 'Tent of Meeting' (R.V.), *i.e.*, the tent in which Jehovah met with His people.² The rendering 'Tabernacle of the Congregation' (A.V.) gives therefore a mistaken application of the phrase. The 'tent' appears first to have been that of Moses himself, pitched without the camp (Exod. xxxiii. 7), and resorted to by 'every one which sought Jehovah.' Afterwards the more permanent structure is designated by the same phrase.³ Occasionally it is termed *ohel ha-eduth*, 'Tent of the Testimony,'⁴ *i.e.*, of the Tables of the Law. But the more general term is *mishkan*, 'dwelling;' as *mishkan ha-eduth*, *mishkan ohel moed*. It was also the Holy Place,⁵ the House of Jehovah.⁶ Thus the Tabernacle was not only a place for worship, but a tent, wherein God sojourned as the leader of His people; the place of meeting, where He could be approached by the children of Israel; the tent of witness, a continual memorial and reminder of the fact that

¹ Once only found alone in this sense, 1 Kings i. 39.

² See Exod. xxix. 42-46.

³ Exod. xxxix. 32; xl. 2, 22, 24, 26, etc.; Lev. and Numb. throughout; Josh. xviii. 1; 1 Kings viii. 4; 2 Chron. i. 3.

⁴ Numb. ix. 15; xvii. 7, 8; xviii. 2; 2 Chron. xxiv. 6. See Acts vii. 44. The Revisers of the Old Testament always distinguish between *ohel*, 'tent,' and *mishkan*, 'tabernacle.'

⁵ *Mikdash*, Exod. xxviii. 43.

⁶ Josh. vi. 24.

their God was a jealous God, and would have none other gods but Himself.

The time of rearing the Tabernacle is significant. The nation was, so to speak, first consolidated by the Ten Words given to them. Then, the moral code being unfolded, and man's duty towards his neighbour clearly understood, it was time to appoint a religious law; since religion is what concerns each individual specially. For, if in a man's mind there is no separation into deeds wrong and right, there can be no desire for reparation of injuries, no feeling that anything has been done contrary to accepted rules. But 'by the law is the knowledge of sin;' and therefore follows the necessity of atonement. But further, the desire for a worship would be doubly strong, that is, for a propitiatory worship, if some public act had been committed which was deemed reprehensible. This occasion we have in the Sin of the Golden Calf. The Israelites had been impelled to make this calf, not because they wished to copy the Egyptians—they had too recently escaped from their bondage to have such a desire—but from the want they felt to have a visible token of God's leadership among them. But once terribly punished for their fault, and with the knowledge of Moses' presence near them, they joyfully embraced the opportunity afforded them by the plan of the Tabernacle-building to make their peace with Jehovah. Gifts poured in from all sides, and in a very short time, between the third month of the first year and New Year's day of the second, this being inclusive of the forty days of Moses' sojourn on Sinai, the whole Tabernacle was finished.

In this place it only remains to say a few words as to the after history of the edifice. Carried about by the Israelites all through the years of their wanderings, when they had at last reached the land of Canaan, it went across Jordan with them to Gilgal, and seems to have been finally pitched in Shiloh.¹ After this time the Tabernacle, from all accounts, must have been made into a more permanent building. There Eli and

¹ Josh. xviii. 1.

Samuel were priests.¹ Then we read of the Ark being captured and carried into the country of the Philistines, and of its return to Kirjath-jearim. It is impossible to say what was the fate of the structure of the Tabernacle. The Ark itself was brought into Solomon's Temple.² Jewish tradition, no doubt as untrustworthy in this case as usual, says: Fourteen years was the Tabernacle in Gilgal, over three hundred years in Shiloh, fifty-seven in Nob and Gibeon. Some say it was buried beneath the foundations of the Temple; others again, that after the destruction of the Temple it was carried to Babylon. Certain it is, whatever credit we may give these stories, that the need for the Tabernacle had passed away. The nation had grown out of its infant stage. A gorgeous Temple, that is, gorgeous to the eyes of its then beholders, had taken the place of the curtained tent. Later on, the synagogues and places for prayer would put even the Temple itself in the background. And that all these forms of worship were at best only temporary, and that read in the light of our days they were but 'a figure for the time then present,' we now clearly see; for there is 'a greater and more perfect Tabernacle, not made with hands,' even the spiritual Church of God.

¹ 1 Sam. i., etc.

² 1 Kings viii. 4.

PART I.

Holy Places and Persons.

PART I.

Holy Places and Persons.



CHAPTER I

The Outer Court of the Tabernacle.

IN the midst of the Israelitish camp in the wilderness, where each tribe encamped by itself under its own leader and its own standard, rose the TABERNACLE, half tent, half dwelling.

Seen from the outside it was altogether a tent. Surrounded by an open court, only separated from the outer world by curtained pillars, stood the Sanctuary, an oblong mass of coverings. The outer court itself was one hundred cubits¹ long by fifty broad, and was surrounded by pillars, sixty in number: forty on the north and south sides, and twenty on the east and west. These pillars were fastened to the ground by 'stays;' it was tent-like in this: and from one pillar to the other all the way round ran a curtain made of 'byssus,'² fastened to the pillars by hooks, and run on to a rod overlaid with silver. The pillars themselves were five cubits high, and made of acacia (translated 'shittim' in our Authorised Version) wood, their capitals being overlaid with silver, and their sockets made of brass. The entrance into the Sanctuary was on the east side, where six out of the ten pillars supported the byssus curtain, three on each side, the middle four pillars holding up, instead of the byssus, a beautiful many-coloured curtain, made of hyacinth, purple, crimson, and fine twined byssus.

¹ *Cubits*.—We have retained the Bible word for the measurements. Approximately, the English reader may reckon the cubit as half a yard; really it was a little more: about half a *mètre*.

² 'Fine twined linen,' Exod. xxxvi 8.

This was all that appeared to the outside beholder.

Reckoning the cubit at rather more than one and a half feet (see note on the preceding page), the height of the pillars and of the curtains must have been nearly eight feet. The wood used here, and throughout the whole Tabernacle, was acacia wood (the *spina ægyptiaca* of the ancients), which is almost the only wood fit for carpentering purposes to be found in the Sinai Peninsula. The wood is at first of a yellow colour, gradually becomes dark, is very hard, and does not rot. Thus, as at Bethel the stones of the place could make an angels' ladder to Jacob, so did the desert of their wandering supply the Jews with the wherewithal to build a Sanctuary.

In the points where the tent-character of the Tabernacle was the first object, everything was of the simplest kind. The pillars were plain, and of acacia wood; but their capitals ('fillets') were beautiful in shape, and covered with silver. The hangings again were only of byssus, though this of the very best. On the other hand, the brass sockets of the pillars¹ showed clearly that the foundation laid was a firm one, and thus, that the ground of the worship was sure. The symbolism carried upwards, the plain shafts of the pillars, surmounted with silver, marked an increase in holiness or beauty, just as the byssus curtains around were expanded into the beautiful many-coloured curtain before the pillars of entrance.

It is not forcing a parallel, nor seeking a meaning not already there, to say that everything about the Tabernacle was intended to body forth some grand religious or ethical truth. That such meanings are now pretty clearly, and in the future will be doubtless still more clearly, read in most of the world's ancient monuments, there can be little doubt. And, to take even the lowest ground, the same might be expected to be true in the case of one of the oldest nations of the world—of the Jews. But when it is added that the construction was according to Divine command and 'pattern,' we reach the sure conclusion that *all* is significant; although, it may be, many

¹ Exod. xxxvi. 38.

parts await interpretation. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the Christian student finds in the meantime a certain and sufficient guide.

Having premised this, we now proceed to examine the interior of the court, which was entered on the east side by lifting the huge curtain (20×5 cubits). Theologians have seen in the colours of this curtain a picture of the kingdom of God; in the hyacinth—a dark blue, almost the colour of the sky in those latitudes—its heavenly origin and character; in the purple—a dark red, the royal colour—its kingly splendour; in the *accus* or scarlet—the colour of blood—its consecration through sacrifice; and in the white and shining byssus, its holiness. Thus, as temporary, the Tabernacle was made of the commonest, most ordinary materials, acacia and brass; but as God's dwelling it was pure (byssus); and as the King's palace beautiful (silver and coloured work).

But this was only the outside, the wall of separation, dividing the holy from the profane or common. In this sense it was that the Jews afterwards looked upon Jerusalem as the outer court of the Temple, whither the stranger and foreigner was allowed to come. The court was uncovered, for here the Divine and the human touched, as did the earth and sky: it was to the Sanctuary what the Jewish nation was to be to the world—the point of contact between Jehovah and the Gentiles. The symbolism of the numbers of pillars, of their distances from each other, of the peculiar shape of the building (an oblong), need not here trouble us. They have been the subject of many ingenious theories from the days of the ancient Jewish mystics onwards. Still, it must always be borne in mind that the outer court was in no sense a *dwelling*. It was simply a vestibule to, and preparation for, better things, which were reserved for better, *i.e.*, holier, men: the Priesthood.

THE LAVER.

Entering the court on the east side, the first object in view was the Laver (Hebrew, *kivvot*). This was an immense

basin of brass, round and deep, standing on a pedestal, for the use of the priests and Levites when they had to wash before performing any service. The 'base' of the Laver has given rise to a great difference of opinion. According to some authorities, it was a deep trough, intended to catch the water which ran over from the basin; according to others, it was only an ornamental pedestal. We are not told how the water in the Laver was renewed; but this one note is added, in the Pentateuch, to the very scanty picture drawn for us: the base was made of, or ornamented with, the 'mirrors of the serving women which served at the door of the tent of meeting.'¹ We cannot now tell who these women were. The Septuagint adds, 'they had fasted.' Were they regular attendants at the Tabernacle services, or women who were employed about the building for cleaning, washing, or even to assist in some ceremonies? We know that the Egyptian women, when they visited the temples, were accustomed to go in linen garments, with a mirror in the left hand, and a *sistrum* in the right. May it not have been that Moses was directed to turn this remnant of the old Egyptian life and corruption, now freely contributed by its possessors, into an ornament for beautifying the Laver, which was to symbolise Israel's entire separation from the outside world, its 'Holiness to the Lord'?

THE ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING.

Passing the Laver, wherein each priest washed his hands and feet before engaging in any service, the principal object in the outer court, the great Altar of Burnt Offering, came in sight. This altar, so called because on it the daily burnt offering was consumed, and because in consequence it had a perpetual fire glowing on it,² was a square chest-like object made of acacia wood, three cubits high by five broad and long.³ This wooden

¹ Exod. xxxviii. 8, R.V.

² Lev. vi. 13.

³ The customary representations of this 'great' altar make it appear much too large; as it was only from four and a half to five feet in height. The altar in Solomon's Temple was ten cubits in height, twenty in length and breadth, and it was constructed entirely of brass.

altar was covered with brass, and its four corners at the top were ornamented with 'horns.' The signification of these horns has puzzled many commentators. Undoubtedly they were partly ornamental, and partly a necessary feature in the structure of the altar.¹ Further, they were not a new invention in the Jewish Tabernacle, but we find traces of them as existing in heathen architecture. But as everything in the Tabernacle had its special meaning, we are scarcely wrong in judging that the 'horns' signified the high point, the holiest place, of the altar; and as holiness is beauty, the horns (which in Nature is the most beautiful thing in the animal) on the altar were to be sprinkled with the most precious thing these animals could give—their life-blood.

Round about the altar ran the *karkob*, a term which has also proved very puzzling to theologians. In the Revised Version the account given of this *karkob* reads as follows: 'And thou shalt make for it a grating of network of brass; and upon the net shalt thou make four brasen rings in the four corners thereof. And thou shalt put it under the ledge round the altar beneath, that the net may reach half way up the altar.'² Many and varied are the theories concerning this 'network.' Some would have it that it was a kind of fender, to take the ashes; others, that it was a bank on which the priests stood to minister; others, again, that it was simply ornamental, being decorated, serving to secure the altar and also to beautify it. But, as it reached from the ground up to the middle of the altar, from its position it could scarcely have been of much service—except perhaps in keeping the priests from inadvertently touching the altar. Likewise, to it were fastened, or rather to the network above it, the staves by which the altar was conveyed from one camping-place to another. And here the heavy framework would almost seem to require something stronger than the mere brass covering of the acacia wood altar for its support. For the altar itself—that is, the brass and wood—was simply a hollow covering for the real altar, which according

¹ 'The horns of it,' Exod. xxvii. 2, R.V.

² Exod. xxvii. 4, 5.

to Divine command must always be of earth or of unhewn stones.¹ Earth would most probably be preferred during the years in the wilderness, as being so much easier to procure. The making of earthen altars seems to have been common in antiquity, especially among the Greeks and Romans; in fact, among the Romans these seem to have been the most ancient kind. But to the Jew his altar of earth or unhewn stone meant that the world, the earth, was the true foundation of the kingdom of God; and that as by earth man had sinned, so by earth was he reconciled. The stone, over which chisel and gavel had never yet been lifted up, stood for pure and unfalsified offering to God. And finally, the approach to the altar was by an inclined plane, as seemliest for the ministering priests.

Such was the altar on which Israel offered sacrifice, in the place where heaven and earth met, and where the chosen nation stood as sacrificing priest for all the nations of the world.

To the altar belonged all usual utensils: pans (*sîroth*), for the fat and ashes; shovels (*ya'im*), to take up the cinders; basins (*mizragoth*), for the blood of the victims; flesh-hooks (*mizlagoth*), for taking up the flesh; fire-pans (*machtoth*), for taking live coals from the altar, or for burning incense.² They were all made of brass.

These were the contents and equipments of the outer Sanctuary court. Here did the worshipper, the world shut out from his view, and only the clear air of heaven above him, enter to come near to God. For him the great object in the Tabernacle was ever the Altar of Burnt Offering; for each time he approached God it must be through blood: 'apart from shedding of blood there is no remission.' The outer court of the Sanctuary, to modern eyes, might appear very primitive, even barbarous. The continual smoke of burning meat which rose up would, no doubt, greatly offend nineteenth-century nostrils. But to the Jew of those days this was the right and fitting way

¹ Exod. xx. 24, 25.

² Exod. xxvii. 3.

to draw nigh to God. They were in the child-stage; we, who have become men, have put away childish things. But the lesson was not less clearly taught in those days than it is in ours, that the Lord is in His holy Temple, and that sin must be put away by sacrifice before the worshipper can approach Him acceptably. The good things of which the law had a shadow are still good things to us. Through 'one offering,' these blessings—purity and perfection—are to be attained.¹ To re-echo now the words of the Psalmist, in which the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews reads the meaning of all worship: 'Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.' 'To do this is to dwell in the kingdom of God.

¹ Heb. x. 14.

CHAPTER II.

The Holy Place.

‘SEE . . . that thou make all things according to the pattern that was showed thee in the mount . . . a copy and shadow of the heavenly things.’¹ To the Jew, then, the Tabernacle was to mean more than a thing made with human hands. And so he who had been purified by the Laver, and reconciled to God at the great Altar of Burnt Offering, who was God’s priest, the chosen out of the chosen race, the holier than the holy—he might cross the outer court, and enter what was, in a real sense, God’s dwelling, His tent among men.

The Holy Place was situated rather more towards the west end than in the middle of the outer court. In the court the Laver and the Altar must have occupied considerable space ; and the enclosure was also intended for the use of the congregation of Israel who came up to worship.

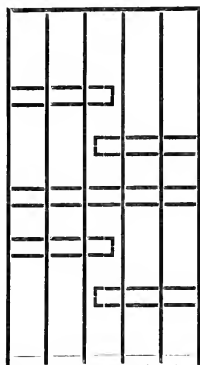
But the beauty and glory of anything in the outer court paled before the true Sanctuary. Not that the outside of it was very magnificent. The building was made of upright boards of acacia wood, twenty on each side—*i.e.*, north and south, and eight to the back—*i.e.*, the west end. The east side, which formed the entrance, had no board, and was as to framework an open space. Each board was ten cubits high and one and a half broad, so that the total length of the side-walls was thirty cubits, north and south ; and as two of the eight boards on the west side were ‘corner’ boards,² the breadth of the

¹ Heb. viii. 5, R.V.

² There appears to be some difficulty as to these corner boards. Six of the boards to the west of the Holy Place would make nine cubits—which leaves one cubit to be accounted for. Josephus says that the two corner boards were half a cubit broad ; but without admitting such an unsymmetrical appearance as these slips of board would present, it is easy to imagine

Holy Place is usually reckoned at ten cubits. The upright acacia wood boards were each sunk, by means of two 'tenons' (Hebrew, *yadoth*, hands), into two 'sockets' (*adanin*), which were accordingly one hundred in number: forty on each side (north and south), and twenty to the west. These sockets were made of silver, each one being cast out of a talent of silver. Reckoning the talent at 3,000 shekels (= about £387 10s.), the value of these comparatively unornamental parts of the Holy Place must have been very considerable—about £38,750. Josephus seems to think that the single sockets of the pillars in the outer court, being made only of brass, were partially sunk in the ground. Not so those of the Holy Place.

To strengthen the boards, and keep them in their places, five rows of rings held five bars, which passed across the upright boards, not the whole way along, but somewhat after this fashion, so that even these bolts and rings were ornamental:—



It will be seen that the middle bar passed right across.¹ Both boards and bars were covered with gold leaf, the rings being

that the corner boards projected as far as the outside face of the boards of the sides, the thickness of which might easily make up the missing cubit of the boards (reckoning them at $1\frac{1}{2}$ cubit broad); and that the measurements were taken from the inside, from corner to corner.

¹ Comp. Exod. xxvi. 28.

of gold. To the outside beholder, then, this must have seemed a Sanctuary bright with the most precious metals of earth.

Thus much for the north, south, and west sides. The east, which to an Oriental meant the front of the world, was separated from the outer court by five pillars, made of acacia wood overlaid with gold leaf. But the sockets of these pillars were made only of brass, as signifying that something still better was reserved for him who entered the Sanctuary. From the five pillars hung, by golden rings, a curtain or 'screen'—so the Revised Version—'of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen,'—the last the much-disputed byssus, now generally thought to be the cotton of the East—certainly not silk.

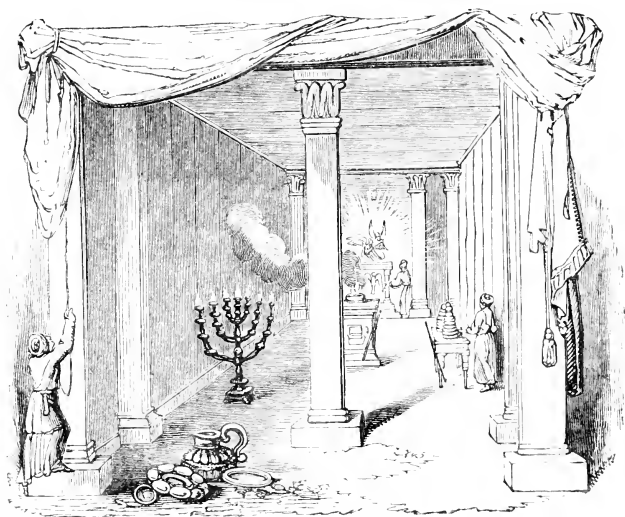
DIVISIONS OF THE SANCTUARY.

Within the Sanctuary were two rooms, or divisions, the innermost one being the 'Holy of Holies,' the most sacred part of the Holy Place. This was perfectly symmetrical: ten cubits high by ten long and broad. It was separated from the Holy Place by four pillars, covered with gold leaf, and set in four sockets of silver. A 'Veil' (Hebrew, *parocheth*, separation, parting) hung from the four pillars, being fastened to them by golden hooks. The Veil is described as 'of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen: with cherubim the work of the cunning workman.'¹ That is, the entire curtain, as well as that before the Holy Place itself, was only of cotton; but whereas the outer curtain was only beautiful in colour, the inner Veil was embroidered with the best skill of the best workman.

While we are not told what, if any, coverings or carpets were laid on the floor of the Sanctuary—in fact, the floor itself is not mentioned—a very minute description is given of the coverings or 'roofs' of the tent. Immediately over the boards and pillars was hung, or rather laid, a covering of byssus, similar to that of the Veil, *i.e.*, of 'fine twined linen, and blue,

¹ Exod. xxxvi. 35, R.V.

and purple, and scarlet, with cherubim the work of the cunning workman.' But this covering was not all in one piece. It was made up of ten curtains, each twenty-eight by four, and put together in this manner: 'Five curtains shall be coupled together one to another; and the other five curtains shall be coupled one to another. And thou shalt make loops of blue upon the edge of the one curtain from the selvedge in the coupling [that is, outmost in the first set]; and likewise shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that is outmost in the



INTERIOR OF THE SANCTUARY.

second coupling. Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain, and fifty loops shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that is in the second coupling [set]; the loops shall be opposite one to another. And thou shalt make fifty clasps of gold, and couple the curtains one to another with the clasps: and the tabernacle shall be one.'¹ But as this covering was only to form a roof to the building, there was a great deal more of it

¹ Exod. xxvi. 1-6, R.V.

than was required for the purpose. That the roof was *ridged* appears more than probable, although many representations of the Sanctuary give the roof as flat. The length of the curtain (twenty-eight cubits) would thus serve to cover the breadth of the Tabernacle (ten cubits), still leaving over sufficient material to overlap the top of the wall-boards and to hang down on each side. The breadth of the curtains (four by ten = forty cubits), was too long for the length of the Tabernacle (thirty cubits—or, including the boards on the west side, thirty-one cubits), and therefore it hung down also to a certain extent on the west side. It has been suggested that this byssus-covering was that used for festivals, or in fine weather—for, indeed, it seems strange that, as the Mosaic account appears to imply, it should have been made so very beautiful if it was never to be seen at all.

The next covering—which the same commentator thinks was meant for foul weather—was made of goats' hair. The curtains, or carpets, were here eleven in number, each thirty by four cubits. The great divisions were into five and six; but as the total breadth required to cover the length of the Tabernacle was only thirty-one cubits, and the curtains were eleven by four (= forty-four cubits), the superfluous covering was thus got rid of: In front, *i.e.*, on the east side, the sixth of the six curtains was doubled back, but not to quite its whole breadth—in fact, probably only half—forming a sort of gable, so to speak, for extra protection against storm. There now remain forty-two cubits of covering to thirty-one cubits of the Tabernacle, thus leaving some cubits to hang down on the west side, completely hiding the byssus-curtains underneath. North and south the thirty cubits of goats' hair carpet hung nine cubits on each side, again covering the byssus.

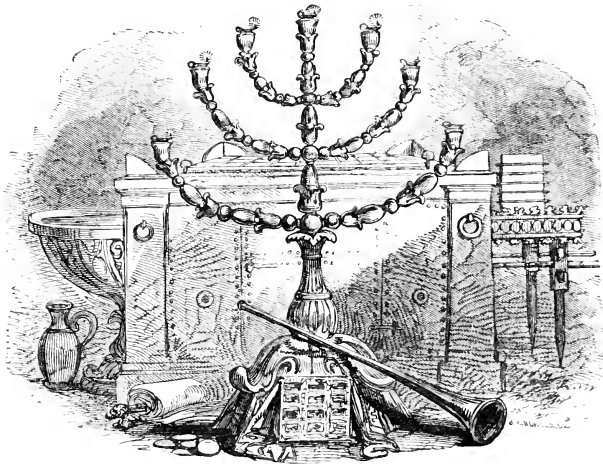
It seems also probable that this covering was securely fastened, at a little distance from the silver sockets of the boards, by the 'pins' and 'cords' referred to in Exod. xxvii. 19; xxxv. 18.

Above these two coverings was the 'roof' (Hebrew, *gag*).

It consisted of two coverings, the under one of rams' skins dyed red, the outer one of *tachash* skins, rendered 'seal-skins' and 'porpoise-skins' by the Revisers, and now generally supposed to be the skin of the dolphin (*dugong*), of which we are told there are three species in the Red Sea, and which would therefore not be difficult to procure in the Desert of Sinai.

THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.

Scanty light of day penetrated within the Sanctuary; but nevertheless, both by day and by night, to mark that the



THE CANDLESTICK, OR LAMPSTAND.

Keeper of Israel neither slumbered nor slept, the Holy Place was ablaze. For within it, on the south side, stood the great seven-branched Golden Candlestick,¹ type of the nation Israel, the bringer of light into the world. Its weight was enormous, a talent of gold; for it was all of pure metal, and is calculated to have been worth over £5000. Nor was it 'barbaric' gold. From a golden foot or base sprang a single upright stem,

¹ *Candlestick*.—With the Revisers we retain the word, although *lampstand* would be more literally exact.

supported on either side by three branches, in all making seven stems. We cannot tell how far the original Candlestick, of which the pattern had been seen in the Mount, was like that depicted on the Arch of Titus. In form the Tabernacle Candlestick was like an almond plant, the almond (*shaked*, the 'early waker') being the type of Israel, the first nation to wake out of the winter's sleep of uselessness and suspended life.¹ Very minute is the description given of the Candlestick. The central shaft, or 'reed,' was no longer than the side ones; but it, and they all, were ornamented with opening buds—of course all 'of one piece with it'—arranged in this manner: First a 'knop,' then on the knop a 'bud.' Each branch had four such 'knops'; but the fourth 'bud' opened rather wider, and held a 'cup,' in which was placed the pure, beaten, white olive-oil and the wick, from whence the Holy Place was filled with light. These seven 'cups' or lamps were trimmed every morning, and re-lighted every evening. It is a moot point whether they were kept burning all day as well as all night. Had they been totally extinguished each morning, the priests would have been obliged to grope their way in almost complete darkness during the day. Josephus tells us that in his time at least three out of the seven lamps were kept burning all day, while the other four were lighted in addition at night. The most trustworthy exegetes suggest that the lamps were removed and refilled with oil each night, in order to ensure their burning all night; and that Aaron's 'dressing the lamps' in the morning merely consisted of cleaning them, and, if necessary, pouring in more oil, the cups not being then moved from their places.

To the Golden Candlestick belonged its necessary vessels, 'tongs,' and 'snuffdishes,' for use in its cleaning. It would seem that these vessels were included in, and formed part of, the talent of gold set apart for the Candlestick. The wick of the lamps was so arranged that each light shone on one

¹ The almond is known to bud and 'awake' as early as January in the regions about Palestine.

particular part of the building. It was 'set up' in such fashion, 'to give light over against it.'

So much for the appearance of the Candlestick. But to those who looked beneath the surface of mere beauty, it was all a picture of 'heavenly things.' The Candlestick—so we are expressly told in the Apocalypse—is the Church; and the Tabernacle Candlestick was the Old Testament Church. The light came from the oil, always a symbol of the Holy Ghost; its number of branches (seven) showed that it was a heavenly creation; its light shed on the surrounding darkness, was a picture of the Church's mission in the world. Pure, unmixed with baser metal, it was the ideal Church; and the memory of it has not yet faded from the pages of the world's history, since its stony picture remains among the ruins of Imperial Rome.

THE ALTAR OF INCENSE.

But the Candlestick, after all, was second in importance to the Golden Altar of Incense. This was undoubtedly on a small scale. The *Mizbeach haqqetoreth* was but two cubits high by one broad and long. Like the great Altar of Burnt Offering in the outer court, it was made of acacia wood, but overlaid with gold; but whereas the greater Altar was, so to speak, the receptacle for blood and bloody sacrifices, on the 'Golden Altar' blood was put only once a year, when, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest sprinkled the horns of the altar. In the Epistle to the Hebrews it is located in the Holy of Holies; and this has afforded the commentators ample ground for cavilling. According to some, this serves to further demonstrate the fact that, in all likelihood, the Golden Altar had no objective existence. Others again, explain this misplacement of the Incense Altar by the fact that it is sometimes known in tradition as the 'inner altar;' or, and as it seems to us more feebly, that it must have been so called, from standing in a line with the Mercy-Seat. That, however, the Altar of Incense *did* exist, and that it formed an essential element in the daily worship of the Tabernacle, cannot be doubted; and without profitless

discussions we are fairly entitled to enumerate it among the vessels of the Holy Place.

To return. The Golden Altar, small as it was, was very beautiful. All round the 'roof' (Hebrew, *gag*) ran a 'crown,' supposed by some to be a rim or edge; by others, a kind of wall. The altar was square; and, like that of Burnt Offering, had horns, a part of an altar evidently considered necessary in antiquity. These horns were all of one piece with the altar, and were overlaid with gold. The usual rings for carrying the altar were placed at the two sides, rather underneath and hidden by the 'crown.' We are left in no doubt as to the meaning of the altar. Every morning and evening, when Aaron dressed the lamps on the Golden Candlestick, he was perpetually to burn incense. Incense, as we know, is the symbol of prayer. 'Let my prayer be set forth as incense before Thee';¹ and St. John the Divine was shown in the Apocalypse the prayers of saints, like bowls of incense. By this symbolism we are not, however, to understand that as incense ascends to heaven, so do the prayers of the saints; but rather that, as the sweet odour of incense goes up, so is the prayer of a good man acceptable and pleasing to God.² For, further, the altar of incense was not in the outer court, and therefore had nothing to do with the approach of God's world-family to Him. It was in the holy place, where only His purified and specially appointed priests could come. And what, then, was the sacrifice which ideal Israel offered? Hosea, as one has well put it, knew this, when he placed in the mouth of returning Israel these words: 'Take away all iniquity, and accept that which is good; so will we render the fruit of our lips.'³ The incense, then, was the heart speaking in the life.

This same incense was made of a mixture of materials, the most valuable to be obtained in those regions. The ingredients named are: stacte (*στακτή*, Hebrew, *nataph*), a species of gum

¹ Psalm cxli. 2, R.V.

² So the best commentators.

³ Hos. xiv. 2, R.V. marg.

storax; onycha or onyx (ὄνυξ, *unguis odoratus*, Hebrew, *shecheleth*), obtained from a mussel-fish somewhat resembling that from which the famous purple dye was obtained, and found both in India and in the Red Sea, also used in medicine; galbanum (χαλβάνη, Hebrew, *chelbenah*, the *ferula*), obtained from the shrub by making incisions in its bark, when a thick gum oozes out, first white, gradually turning yellow, bitter in taste and disagreeable in smell. It was much used in ancient times for getting rid of insects; but when mixed with other scents, it helps to bring out their particular odour. At that period it was not much known beyond the limits of Syria. The last ingredient was frankincense (*lebonah*, λίβανος), a pale yellow, bitter-tasting resin, smelling most deliciously when lighted, brought to the Jews from Arabia Felix by caravans, in which country it was not only cultivated, but the purest was made to fall upon outspread coverings placed beneath the trees. All these spices were first carefully prepared separately and then mixed together, probably in equal quantities. The incense was then seasoned with salt, without which no sacrifice could be acceptable, kept by itself, and only to be used for holy purposes. Imitation was punished by death.

THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD.

The third object in the Holy Place was the Table of Shewbread (*shulchan lechem panim*, table of the Bread of the Face), so called because upon it were offered continually unleavened cakes, presented before the face of the Lord. The table itself was similar in appearance and height to the Altar of Incense. Although the Septuagint makes it of massive gold, the Hebrew text is not here in accordance with the Greek,¹ and describes it as of acacia wood covered with pure gold,² one and a half cubit high by two long and one broad. It stood on four legs, and its top was like that of the Altar, surrounded by a 'crown,' probably the ledge we have before suggested. Commentators, in their scrupulously minute investigations, have

¹ Comp. Exod. xxv.

² Hence its name, 'the pure table,' 2 Chron. xiii. 11.

been unable to discover whether there were two ledges or one. But, as after all, the Table was but the secondary element in this 'heavenly picture' (the bread being the primary), we may be content to leave the point in doubt. Four rings for carrying the Table were fixed under the ledge at the four corners, of course of pure gold, and the necessary staves were not wanting. On the Table were placed, every Sabbath morning, twelve cakes, each made of two-tenths of an ephah of finest flour. The cakes were arranged in two piles of six each, and were probably

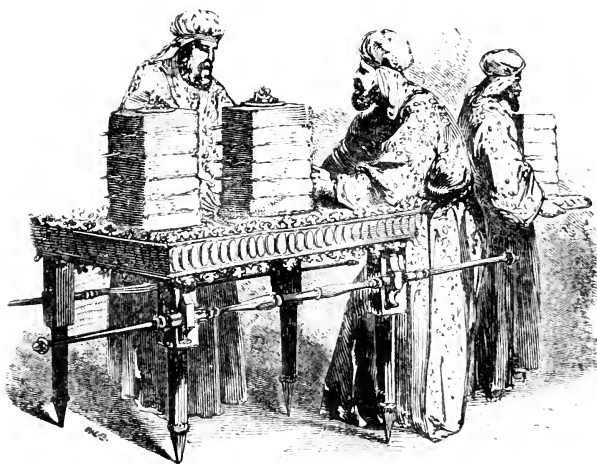


TABLE OF SHEWBREAD.

placed on dishes. To each pile belonged a certain quantity of incense, which probably was not sprinkled on the bread, but placed in dishes near it. When the cakes were removed from the Table, the incense was burned on the Golden Altar; the bread was given to the priests as food. Thus, as one commentator somewhat quaintly remarks, the loaves are good works, of which the holy man enjoys the fruits even in this world. The same writer goes on to remark that the four-sided Table stood for the kingdom of God, and the bread on it signified the fruit of Israel's labour in God's heritage. As it was not acceptable

without incense, so unless the works gave a good odour to those around, they were not fitting as an offering. The number of the cakes—twelve—stood for the twelve tribes; that it was reckoned among the meat-offerings showed that even the ordinary daily food was to be consecrated to God.

VESSELS OF THE SANCTUARY.

To the Table, as well as to the Altar and to the Candlestick, belonged certain vessels, rendered in the Revised Version 'dishes,' 'spoons,' 'flagons,' and 'cups.' What these vessels were used for is matter of dispute. The first-named vessel (*qe'arah*) was probably a deep and big dish, used for bringing the shewbread to the Table. The second (*kaph*) was most likely for the incense; while the two last would be used for the drink-offering.¹

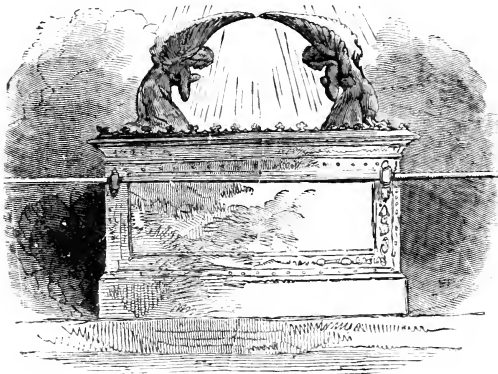
All these vessels in the Holy Place, when they had to be moved from one camping-place to another, were carefully wrapped in 'blue' (purple?) cloths, which were again covered with porpoise (or seal?) skins. Thus veiled from profane view, they were carried by the various families of the Levites. The smaller vessels were placed on a frame, then covered and carried away.

THE HOLY OF HOLIES: THE ARK.

Leaving the Candlestick on the left (or south) side, the Golden Altar in the middle of the Sanctuary, and the Table of Shewbread on the right (or north) side, the Veil was now the only object which divided the priest from the Holy of Holies. Within this Holy of Holies stood what a writer has well called the Palladium of the nation, that Ark whose presence alike Jew and foe believed would ensure victory. The Ark, called in earliest days 'the Ark of the Covenant,' later on, the 'Ark of Witness,' 'of God,' 'of Jehovah,' was an acacia wood chest, two and a half cubits long by one and a half broad and high.

¹ Numb. iv. 7.

This box was covered within and without with gold, was surmounted by a golden crown, and at each corner had a foot, which turned slightly outwards. Upon the chest was placed the *kapporeth*, not intended to serve merely as a lid, but in form a massive gold plate, as large in circumference as the Ark, and designed for a special purpose. For the Mercy-Seat, indeed, was the place of God's presence among men. It was surmounted by two golden Cherubs—'the Cherubim of Glory'—figures of winged beings, whether in appearance like human beings or like animals does not appear. Each cherub had



ARK AND MERCY-SEAT.

two wings overshadowing the Mercy-Seat ; that is, the figures were slightly inclined, in an attitude, not of prayer, but of reverence. It has been thought that the winged figures on the Assyrian monuments give an idea of the appearance of these Cherubim of Glory, but the conjecture can hardly be sustained. It is rather to the monuments of Egypt than to the later ones of Assyria, that we would look.

The staves for transporting the Ark were always fixed in it, possibly as depicted above ; or, as some have thought, on the two shorter sides, so that their ends would project towards the Veil and the Holy Place. The wings of the Cherubim

stretched from north to south, and completely veiled the place where God sat throned among men. Within the Ark were kept the Two Tables of the Law, five of the Ten Words being written on each table; by their place in the Ark showing that God's presence on the Mercy-Seat was after all founded on and secured by His commandments to men. Further, that the Deity appeared between two living creatures (the Cherubim) proved that life, eternal life, proceeded from Him; and that this, the high-point of the Old Testament ritual, was indeed a movable Sinai—the sign of God's mercy and favour to His people. 'Sinai is in the Sanctuary.'¹

Before the Ark were placed: Aaron's Rod that budded, and a Pot of Manna. Fitting was it that the memorials of the wonders God had worked for man should always be before His face: the food for His children (manna); and His Word settling for ever who they were who alone might approach Him (the rod).

We know comparatively little of the later history of the Ark. It was in the Temple of Solomon, but not in that of Herod, where the great stone, 'the foundation-stone of the world,' yearly sprinkled with blood, was the only object in the Holy of Holies. Tradition says that the prophet Jeremiah hid it, along with the Tabernacle (!) in a cave of Mount Nebo when Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldeans, there to remain until the revelation of God's kingdom upon earth. But to the Jew of the days of Herod it was certainly as good as non-existent: nor do we need it now. For the Veil has been rent in twain, that which was in part has been done away, and we no longer see in a mirror darkly, but 'can draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, to receive mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.'

¹ Ps. lxxviii. 17, R.V. marg.

CHAPTER III.

The Priesthood.

THE making of a priest-class has always marked a distinct era in the life of early nations. Up to that time every institution, whether of Church or State, has been, to a great extent, merely provisional. One great leader after another has arisen, and for a time swayed the multitude ; but there has been no security for his influence lasting beyond his own immediate circle. But in the priest-class all the rulers of antiquity have found an immense power to move the masses. Ignorance and superstition being so closely allied, an educated class has it in its hands to rule the world, especially when with the legitimate and necessary power of knowledge there is combined a sentiment that these exceptionally gifted personages can influence not only the present but the future. When to this it is added that these beings are in some mysterious way specially protected, all power lies in the hands of that class.

Egypt was the land of priests and priestcraft. Allied to royalty, at one time actually occupying the throne, the wealth, the learning, the power of Egypt all lay at their feet. They came also into some special association with the family of Israel. Joseph married a daughter of Potipherah, priest of On (Heliopolis), and in the time of the famine the estates of the priests were specially protected.¹ Moses, who was 'learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,'² must have deeply studied this feature of their national life ; and the organization of a priesthood, to which immediately after the

¹ Gen. xli. 45 ; xlvii. 26.

² Acts vii. 22.

Exodus he was divinely called, would find his mind already prepared, and prepossessed with the idea. But from the first, the principles which underlay the appointment were shown to be fundamentally distinct from those which ruled in Egypt. Not superior knowledge or learning, not any supposed magical or supernatural powers, but *holiness* formed the characteristic note of the Mosaic priesthood.

The earlier history of the Covenant People had not been without some hints of this institution. For the most part, indeed, the heads of patriarchal households performed the priestly function.¹ The name, however, is never actually given to them. Only Melchizedek is expressly termed 'the priest of the Most High God,' and his 'order' was without succession.² His figure—as that of the priest-king, rising from Canaanite ignorance and superstition to the knowledge and ministry of the Eternal, and so brought into fellowship with the 'Friend of God,'—in its mysterious solitariness, points across the ages to the Christ. This at least is the chief significance of the narrative, which in itself throws but little light on the religious history of the time. There are glimpses also of a priesthood in Midian,³ and afterwards in Moab;⁴ sufficing with other indications to show that the idea of a special calling to fellowship with God, and to His service by sacrifice, had already gained ground among the nations, when Moses by Divine direction began his legislative work.

The possession of this idea was of immense importance, in preparing the way for the acceptance of the new institution. For it was essentially new in basis and in principle. No Egyptian modes of thought, no process of development from national usages and systems, no traditions, even from patriarchal days, will suffice to explain the grand announcement which Moses was directed to make in the name of Jehovah at the outset of his legislative work: 'Ye shall be unto me a *kingdom of priests*,

¹ Abraham, Gen. xii. 8; Isaac, xxvi. 25; Jacob, xxxiii. 20. See also Job i. 5.

² Heb. vii. 3.

³ Exod. ii. 16; iii. 1.

⁴ Numb. xxiii. 2, 14, 29.

and a holy nation.' Such was the honour of Israel—to be in all its tribes and individuals a priesthood before God, with equal right to approach His altar, and to stand as it were between Him and the rest of mankind as representatives and intercessors. Such was the theoretic position of the chosen people. But it could not at first be realized, for many reasons; chiefly, the tendency to unfaithfulness. The privilege and responsibility diffused over the whole community, would be weakened, if not lost. Hence the need from the first of concentrating the function in a smaller area—at first, within the family of Aaron, naturally chosen as the brother and coadjutor of Moses. The very chapter in which the universal priesthood of Israel is declared, speaks afterwards specifically of 'the priests, which come near to Jehovah.'¹ And when Moses 'drew near unto the thick darkness where God was,' only Aaron was with him. The honour was declared to be hereditary. The four sons of Aaron were from the first associated with him; and when two of them had perished by a judgment from God, the other two, Eleazar and Ithamar, remained, and for centuries the priesthood continued in their line. The ideal, however, remained as the heritage of all Israel. It is recognized in prophecy: 'Ye shall be named the priests of Jehovah; men shall call you the ministers of our God;'² and in the Christian Church it is at last fulfilled: 'Ye are a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ;' and again, 'Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession.'³

CONSECRATION OF THE TRIBE OF LEVI.

Aaron then, and his sons, were the first recognized holders of the priestly office. With them were associated in 'holy things' a number of others from different tribes; as, for instance, the

¹ Exod. xix. 22. Who these priests were is an open question. Some identify them with the 'young men of the children of Israel,' appointed by Moses to offer sacrifice, ch. xxiv. 5.

² Isa. lxi. 6.

³ 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9, R.V.

chief workers in the construction of the Tabernacle were Bezaleel of the tribe of Judah, and Aholiab of the tribe of Dan. There was as yet no priestly *caste*.

A solemn and terrible event, however, led to a further step in the religious organization of the people. The sin of the Golden Calf, catastrophe as it well-nigh was, cleared the way for the tribe of Levi to put themselves on a different footing from the rest of their fellow Israelites. That Moses himself belonged to their tribe may have been almost their sole motive; but they *did* possess a motive, which the other tribes failed to show; and it was evident that under competent guidance the tribe of Levi could fulfil the priestly functions better than any other one.

The nation does not seem to have recovered from their surprise till the priests had actually been consecrated, and the tribe of Levi had entered upon their duties. Then what had been done came upon them in full force, and caused great indignation. The leaders in murmuring—though they were not independent thinkers, for they knew that the people in general were on their side—were Korah, himself a Levite, but who resented the inferior position assigned to him; and two descendants of Reuben, the eldest son of Jacob, who doubtless considered themselves especially aggrieved on account of their prior claim as the ‘firstborn.’ Sharp was the vengeance wreaked on these rebels by an offended Deity; and sorely did the people smart for having taken their part. By such means did the Levites and the family of Aaron obtain and hold their position; and the other tribes, terrified at the wrath which had been meted out on Korah, Dathan, and Abiram,¹ refrained from showing their disapproval any more.

PRIESTLY RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES.

What, then, was this priest-right, so earnestly desired and sought after by all the ambitious in Israel?

It did not mean riches; for we are expressly told that Jehovah alone was the heritage of the children of Levi. Nor was it given on account of any particular merit, since it is in no way admitted that the tribe of Levi was free from share in the guilt of the Golden Calf, while Aaron was even a leader in the act of impiety. If anything, moreover, the Levites were losers rather than gainers by thus giving themselves to the service of Jehovah and the charge of the Sanctuary. For it meant, a renunciation of all share in the coming national



THE SIGN OF AARON'S APPOINTMENT.

triumph and victory, a loss in the shared spoil, an uncertainty in the near future. But the inducements it did offer were more than equal to the losses. Out of a holy nation, itself a pattern and wonder to all around, the tribe of Levi emerged as even holier than the holy, what was most Divine on earth. And it was this separation from even family and kindred which formed the keynote of Moses' blessing on that tribe, and which was the true secret of their influence.

THE HIGH PRIESTHOOD.

Out of the whole tribe of Levi one family was selected—naturally it was that of Moses ; and from this family, one man, Aaron, his brother, to be the head or high priest. As regards Aaron individually, he does not seem to have been remarkable for any great quality of mind. In Egypt, he was the mouth-piece of Moses ; in the wilderness below Sinai, the hand of the people, who fashioned for them the Golden Calf. Later on he is quite ready to upbraid Moses for a marriage not quite to his or his sister's liking ; and finally he joins Moses in that outburst of egotism and anger which cost them both their entrance into the land of Canaan. The events of Aaron's life, then, seem often in strange contrast with his high calling. Of his four sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, two, as we have seen, were utterly discreditable to him, and forfeited their lives in an offence in which it seems doubtful as to what part Aaron bore.¹

From all this it is evident that the priest-class was no more specially favoured as regards ordinary living than any other Israelite. If they sinned, judgment overtook them as freely and as quickly as any Jew. The priest in private and the priest in office were two different persons altogether. As priest, minister of God, he stood apart, responsible only to Jehovah ; as fellow-citizen and member of a family, he owed allegiance to his earthly king or ruler. And now for a more particular account of his office, appearance, and claims on the nation.

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PRIESTHOOD AND MAINTENANCE.

The original meaning of the Hebrew word for 'priest' (*kohen*) is uncertain. Probably it is derived from a root signifying generally the discharge of function, and thus contains in its etymology no express suggestion of the particular function intended. By some, however, it is regarded as de-

¹ Comb. Lev. x.

noting 'one who draweth near : ' see Lev. x. 3. Certainly the regulations concerning the priesthood are all in harmony with this central thought.

In private life the priest was indistinguishable from his neighbour, save in this, that, if he was to do service, he must be without certain personal defects, which, signs or types of moral failing, would have led astray the thoughts of Israel from the perfect purity of their worship. Of these defects, the learned Selden traced in Rabbinical writings no fewer than one hundred and forty-two instances, which were divided into three classes. The first class consisted of fifty defects, and were such as would have unfitted any otherwise clean animal from being brought in sacrifice. Ninety more cases were not to be judged of in the same category ; and again two seem to have been what we may call accidental or extraordinary cases, perhaps only likely to occur once during the whole priestly period. Barring these defects, any descendant of Aaron was by birth a priest, and as soon as he reached the fitting age, was to enter on the duties appointed him. What the age for priestly service was seems doubtful. Most probably it was the thirtieth year, and lasted until the infirmities of age rendered the priest incapable. The Levites, according to Numb. iv. 3 ; viii. 24,¹ were to serve from their twenty-fifth or thirtieth year, up to their fiftieth. But it must not be imagined that their priestly duties interfered with any other profession they might choose to adopt. Their time of service, at any rate in the later history, when the Aaronic family had greatly increased, amounted but to a few weeks in the year ; for the rest of the time, provided the trade was not Levitically unclean, they were their own masters. And this must have formed a not inconsiderable part of their means of livelihood. The other means were :²—

1. *Firstfruits.* These, as explained by after tradition, were the first sun crop of ' wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and

¹ The divergence between these two passages is usually explained by the first five years being counted as those of probation or novitiate.

² Comp. generally Haneberg, *Religiöse Alterthümer d. Bibel.*

pomegranates, oil olives and honey.’¹ They were offered before God with the beautiful formula prescribed in Deut. xxvi. 5, beginning: ‘A Syrian ready to perish was my father.’ Of these offered firstfruits the priests received a certain share.

2. *Firstborn.* These consisted of three classes: (a) of clean animals, (b) of unclean animals, (c) of men. Of the first class, such a firstborn clean animal was brought as a sacrifice,² that is, the blood was sprinkled, and the fat burnt. But the flesh, more particularly the ‘wave’ breast and the right thigh, belonged to the priests, and could be eaten by themselves, or by their families.

Of the second class, the firstborn of unclean animals were redeemed at a certain fixed price. According to Lev. xxvii. 27, this price was to be ‘according to thine (*i.e.* the priest’s) estimation, and shall add unto it the fifth part thereof:’ as it is sometimes quaintly explained, this fifth part was an apology, so to speak, for not being able to offer this particular animal to God. The firstborn of an ass, however, could be exchanged for a lamb. This ordinance is supposed to have particular reference to the fact that the ass was the most useful, if not the only, domestic animal which was unclean.

The third class of firstborn—of men—was the most important of all in its signification. For these firstborn were all essentially priests, who had been sanctified and separated by that great ‘Night of Remembrance,’ the first Passover. But as the tribe of Levi, and out of that tribe the family of Aaron, had been selected for the priesthood, it was but fitting that a suitable acknowledgment should be made by those of whom they had thus become the representatives. The law appointed, therefore, that these firstborn should be ‘ransomed:’ ‘all the firstborn of man among thy sons shalt thou redeem.’³ The sum for each firstborn Israelite is specified in Numb. xviii. 16, R.V., as ‘five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary (the same is twenty gerahs).’ The shekel of the sanctuary was, according to the best writers, the *standard* shekel, of full value. ‘To redeem a

¹ Deut. viii. 8.

² Numb. xviii. 17.

³ Exod. xiii. 13, R.V.

firstborn son must therefore have cost a sum amounting to nearly thirteen shillings of our money. This firstborn tribute must have been a considerable source of income to the priesthood.

Another gift to the priests was what is described in Numb. xv. 18, as 'a heave-offering unto the Lord' of 'a cake of the first of your dough,' or coarse meal. This is termed in Rabbinical writings the *Challah*; but as originally instituted it was doubtless simply intended to keep before Israel the remembrance of Him who was the giver of their daily bread. Still more came to the priests through the 'tenths,' or tithes. This giving of tithes is traceable back to the time of Abraham, who gave them to the mysterious Melchizedek, king of Salem.¹ Under the Mosaic legislation the giving of tithes was made obligatory. According to Lev. xxvii. 30,² every tenth animal, and the tenth part of everything, was holy unto the Lord, and by reason of this belonged to the priests and Levites. Should any man wish to redeem any part of his tithe, he must add to its full value 'the fifth part thereof.' And, adds the writer, 'he shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it; and if he change it at all, then both it and that for which it is changed shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.'³

Further, 'the priests' due from the people, from them that offer a sacrifice'—*i.e.*, on any ordinary occasion, was 'the shoulder, the two cheeks, and the maw.'⁴ Again, the pious in Israel were quite at liberty to give presents or gifts to the priests on any special occasion. In later Judaism these gifts, added to the then obligatory Temple tribute, of which we have the first intimation in 2 Chron. xxiv. 6, where it is called 'the tax of Moses the servant of Jehovah, and of the congregation of Israel,' must have formed a considerable source of revenue.

Lastly, the various towns belonging to the tribe of Levi, and the land reckoned as included in these towns, must have given them some standing as landed proprietors. The list of these cities, as given in Josh. xxi., is as follows:—

Gen. xiv. 20. ² Comp. also Numb. xviii. 21, etc. ³ Lev. xxvii. 33, R.V.

⁴ Deut. xviii. 3.

I. FAMILY OF AARON, 13 CITIES.

From Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. (1) Kiriath-arba, or Hebron. (2) Libnah. (3) Jattir. (4) Eshtemoa. (5) Holon. (6) Debir. (7) Ain. (8) Juttah. (9) Beth-shemesh. (10) Gibeon. (11) Geba. (12) Anathoth. (13) Almon.

II. FAMILY OF KOHATH, 10 CITIES.

From Ephraim, Dan, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. (1) Shechem. (2) Gezer. (3) Kibzaim. (4) Beth-horon. (5) Elteke. (6) Gibbethon. (7) Aijalon. (8) Gath-rimmon. (9) Taanach. (10) Gath-rimmon, or rather Bileam or Jibleam.

III. FAMILY OF GERSHON, 13 CITIES.

From Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the other half-tribe of Manasseh.

(1) Golan. (2) Beeshterah. (3) Kishion. (4) Daberath. (5) Jarmuth. (6) En-gannim. (7) Mishal. (8) Abdon. (9) Helkath. (10) Rehob. (11) Kedesh-naphtali. (12) Hammoth-dor. (13) Kartan.

IV. FAMILY OF MERARI, 12 CITIES.

From Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun. (1) Jokneam. (2) Kartah. (3) Dimnah. (4) Nahalal. (5) Bezer. (6) Jahaz. (7) Kedemoth. (8) Mephaath. (9) Ramoth-gilead. (10) Mahanaim. (11) Heshbon. (12) Jazer.

Total, 48 Cities.

It must not, however, be imagined that these cities came into possession of the Levites all together. On the contrary, we find notices scattered up and down the Old Testament which lead us to infer that many were inhabited by other Israelites; others again, remained for a longer or shorter period in the hands of the Amorites, or other Canaanitish nations; while, at any rate in the time of the Judges, the Levites lived scattered up and down the land, and even inhabited other cities in no wise apportioned to them. Thus, Nob, the 'city of the priests,' of 1 Sam. xxii. 19, is not to be found in the list

given above. This provision then seems scarcely to have been found necessary to secure the means of living to the Levites.

PURITY OF DESCENT.

As regarded descent, each priest must be able to trace his connection with Aaron; and very special care was taken that the genealogy and lineage of each priest was beyond doubt. This applied, of course, most of all to the high priest, in whose person the whole meaning of the priest-tribe, and through them of the nation, was so to speak concentrated. Thanks to this care taken of the genealogies, we are enabled to trace the high priesthood from Aaron even down to the final destruction of the Temple.¹ Not that each priest descended in regular, unbroken succession from Aaron, but he was able to trace his connection with him, and this beyond all doubt even on the part of those otherwise inimical to such an individual. Josephus tells us that the number of high priests from Aaron down to Phannias, of celebrity in the last Jewish war, was eighty-three. Some were descended from Eleazar, others from Ithamar; and in the time of David, at any rate, the claims of the two rival high priests caused some disturbance, which was finally settled by the side taken in politics by the priests themselves. The family of David finally, in the person of Solomon, restored the primacy to the house of Eleazar, with whom it continued till the Babylonian exile.

THE PRIESTLY COSTUME.

The dress of the priests—always in antiquity a mark of office and dignity, was so in the Jewish economy in an especial degree. For an ordinary priest the material selected was byssus, the far-famed Oriental cotton, of the finest texture. For the choice of this material a sanitary reason is adduced in Ezek. xliv. 17, 18; ‘no wool shall come upon them, while they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within; . . . they

¹ It must, however, be noted that many able scholars are doubtful whether there may not be either *lacunæ* or interpolations in the list.

shall not gird themselves with anything that causeth sweat.' The four distinctive priestly garments were¹:—

(1) *Michnesayim*, περισκελῆ, translated in the A.V., also by the Revisers, 'breeches,' garments reaching from the loins to the thighs, of byssus.

(2) *Kuttoneth*, χιτὼν, a 'coat' with sleeves, reaching to the ankles, of byssus likewise. Whether this coat was embroidered, or cunningly woven, seems a matter of doubt. It was fastened at the shoulders by strings.

(3) *Abnet*, 'girdle,' 'the work of an embroiderer.' A commentator here reminds us that in antiquity the girdle was the



HIGH-PRIESTLY COSTUME.

especial mark of rank; for the priest therefore it had a more than common meaning. Josephus gives an elaborate description of it, and says moreover that its length reached to the ankles. The Rabbis made it much longer. We are told that, while ministering, this girdle was thrown over the left shoulder.

(4) *Migbaah*, 'head-tire,' or 'turban,' R.V., 'bonnet,' A.V., a conical head-covering, after the fashion of the priests of antiquity, made of byssus. These caps were rather flat, and were probably made of a twisted strip of cotton fitting some-

¹ See Exod. xxxix. 27-29.

what closely to the priest's head. They covered, according to Josephus, rather more than half the head.

In addition to these four priestly garments, the high priest possessed four specially characteristic of his high functions. On the turban, presumably exactly like that of an ordinary priest, was bound a plate of gold, on which were engraved the words *Kodesh la Jehovah*, Holy to the LORD. This plate shone in the forefront of the turban, and was fastened at the back of the head by a 'lace of blue.'

The four specially high priestly garments were:—

(1) The *mitznepeth*, 'mitre,' which, according to Josephus, was like 'a golden crown polished, of three rows, one above another; out of which arose a cup of gold, which resembled the herb which we call *saccharus*.'¹

(2) The *me'il* or *me'ir*, 'robe,' or mantle, an upper garment, called in Exod. xxviii. 31, 'the robe of the ephod.' This garment was wholly of blue (hyacinth), woven in one piece, with an opening above to admit the head. Around this opening ran 'a binding of woven work . . . as it were the hole of a coat of mail, that it be not rent.' It had armholes, and reached to the knees, or thereabouts. But what was most noticeable in this *me'il* was its border, 'pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet,' *i.e.*, balls made of threads of these different colours, separated by little golden bells, probably of gold thread or wire twisted, which made a tinkling sound as Aaron moved. The reason of this was most probably to give the people warning of the movements of the priest. As for the number of the bells, that has always been a subject for speculation, and a ground for different significations to be attached.

(3) The *ephod*, also a mark of the princely state. This was indeed a garment of glory. The material was, of course, cotton, but it was woven with beautiful threads of colour; gold, purple, and scarlet. It had two shoulder pieces, which were joined to the rest of the garment by bands of work of the same

¹ *Ant.* iii.

kind as the ephod itself, which were still more beautified by two onyx stones which the priest wore, one on each shoulder, evidently of a very large size, as on each stone were engraved six of the twelve names of the children of Israel, so that Aaron might 'bear their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial.'

(4) On the ephod, in front, the priest wore the Breastplate (*choshen hammishpat*), which indeed was so fixed on to that garment as almost to form part of it. It was made of the same gold brocade as was used for the ephod, was one cubit square, and doubled. Above, it was fastened at the two corners by rings and chains to the shoulder pieces of the ephod; below, it was fastened by purple strings to rings in the ephod. On this beautiful piece of gold brocade were set twelve precious stones, in four rows, each row consisting of three stones, and each stone engraved with the name of a tribe. The enumeration has caused great perplexity to interpreters, who have found it most difficult first, to identify the stones, and second, to determine which stone belonged to which tribe. We follow, for the stones and for the tribes, the Revised Version, Bishop Haneberg, *Religiöse Alterthümer der Bibel*, München, 1869, and Dillmann's *Kurzgefasstes Exeg. Handbuch*.

First Row. (1) *Odem*, sardius, or ruby, or cornelian, Reuben.

(2) *Pitdah*, topaz, Simeon.

(3) *Bareqeth*, carbuncle, or emerald, Levi.

Second Row. (4) *Nophech*, emerald, or carbuncle, or ruby, Judah.

(5) *Sappir*, sapphire, Issachar.

(6) *Yahalom*, diamond, or sardonyx, or jasper, Zebulun.

Third Row. (7) *Leshem*, jacinth, amber, Naphtali.

(8) *Shebo*, agate, Dan.

(9) *Achlamah*, amethyst, Gad.

Fourth Row (10) *Tarshish*, beryl, or chalcedony, or chrysolith, Asher.

(11) *Shoham*, onyx, or beryl, Joseph.

(12) *Yash'pneh*, jasper, or onyx, or beryl, Benjamin.

From the foregoing list, and the many stones suggested, it will be seen how very slight are the grounds on which all investigations relating to the priest's dress are based. In the same catalogue of guesses must be placed the mysterious Urim and Thummim ('lights and perfections'). There seems but little doubt that they were distinct from the precious stones, but why they are not described is a puzzling question. They stood for the Divine oracle, were to be inquired of.¹ What then was this mysterious part of the investiture? Very variously has this question been answered. It was the doubled breastplate itself; it was the stones; it was a picture of various virtues; it was a particular light on the stones; it was an imitation of a certain sacred Egyptian breastplate, often seen on the Monuments, with the figures of *Re*, the first god of light, and *Tme*, the goddess of justice; or what seems most likely, two particular precious stones, which changed colour and underwent some subtle change according as the response to the question asked was to be yes or no. We must content ourselves with setting before the reader the materials he may choose from, as after all the question is but one of passing interest.

More curious is it to note, that, although while engaged in any service the priest must be celibate, it was, at any rate in later times, considered somewhat of a disgrace for a priest to be unmarried. Naturally, the laws regulating the marriage of the high priest were still stricter. His wife must be a Jewish maiden, of spotless reputation.²

PRIESTLY SERVICES AND FUNCTIONS.

Concerning the order of service in the priest-tribe, it appears that at first, before the worship was thoroughly fixed, each priest did pretty much what was right in his own eyes. During the stormy days of the Judges, an Eli, a Samuel, a stray Levite, seem to have done almost the sole work of religion. But with the accession of David more settled days began to dawn. He, we are told, found that the number of Levites of an age for

¹ 1 Sam. xxviii. 6.

² Comp. Lev. xxi. 10, 13.

service was thirty-eight thousand.¹ Of this number, twenty-four thousand were delegated 'to oversee the work of the house of the Lord.' Josephus calls them 'sacred servants,'² and one writer suggests that they corresponded to the Roman Catholic deacons. Again, six thousand were told off as 'officers and judges;' four thousand superintended the Temple music, and another four thousand kept the Temple watch. To the twenty-four thousand Levites corresponded the twenty-four priestly families, of which sixteen were descended from Eleazar, and eight from Ithamar. Each 'course' or family served for one week in the Temple, and was then replaced by the next course.³

Another office filled by the priests is that described in Deut. xx. 2, of accompanying an army and giving an exhortation, as well as, evidently, sounding the trumpet at the beginning of a war.⁴ That this was actually the case appears from the allusion made by King Abijah of Judah in his speech to Jeroboam, when he asserted that 'God is with us at our head, and His priests with the trumpets of alarm to sound an alarm against you.'⁵

LEVITICAL CONSECRATION.

The consecration of the Levites was a very simple ceremony. They washed themselves and their clothes thoroughly, shaved all the hair from their flesh, and then offered a young bullock with its 'meal offering, fine flour mingled with oil,' as a burnt offering, and another young bullock as a sin offering. Before, however, this was done, they were sprinkled with the 'water of expiation,' some kind of holy water. The reason for the simplicity of these rites may have been like that of later times: that 'the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests.'⁶

The consecration of the priests was a more elaborate ceremony.⁷ They were first washed, then clothed in regular

¹ See 1 Chron. xxiii. 3. ² *Ant.* xi. 5, 1.

³ Comp. 1 Chron. xxiii. xxiv. ⁴ Numb. x. 8. 9. ⁵ 2 Chron. xiii. 12.

⁶ 2 Chron. xxix. 34. ⁷ See Lev. viii. ; Exo-l. xxix.

order, Aaron as high priest first, and then his sons; and afterwards were anointed with the holy Chrisma, the sacred anointing oil, the preparation of which was secret. Then not only were Aaron and his son anointed, but the whole Tabernacle, and all its furniture; while a bullock was slain for a sin offering, and with its blood the altar purified and sanctified. Then the ram of the burnt offering was slain, and another one, that of consecration, likewise, but with this difference, that whereas the first ram was wholly burnt, the second was used for sprinkling with blood the right ear, thumb, and toe of Aaron and his sons, and various parts of its body in the wave offering, while the rest was boiled and eaten with the bread of consecration by Aaron and his sons at the door of the tent of meeting. The whole time of consecration was brought to an end in seven days, during which time the new-made priests abode at the door of the tent of meeting.

PRIESTHOOD IN THE LATER HISTORY.

We will conclude this sketch of the priestly standing in the Mosaic and immediately succeeding ages by a brief comparison of their true position with that at the downfall of the Jewish nation.

The greatest priest, after the return from Babylon, was undoubtedly Ezra. To him the Jews were indebted for all their after influence in Syria. But, if we except the Maccabees, no priest, as priest, seems to have had much ascendancy over the national mind. The Rabbi then came into prominence, and with this the sacerdotal element gradually receded. The establishment of synagogues, the loss of a central place of worship, all helped to pull down the system so carefully reared by Moses. Then came the spiritualising, if one might so term the hypercritical straining for hidden meanings, the 'straining out the gnat and swallowing the camel,' so characteristic of Rabbinic literature. Yet even in those times the true Israelite might have felt that there was a reality never yet grasped in the Mosaic ritual, and that, as the

high priest was the representative of the priest, and the priest of the people, so Jesus Christ was the representative to God of His people, the kings and priests, as St. Peter calls it, 'a spiritual priesthood,' and that thus we are 'partakers of a heavenly calling ;' and as the priests were sprinkled and washed in consecration, so may we 'draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our body washed with pure water.'

CHAPTER IV.

Other Holy Persons: Nazirites. Vows.

PROVIDED as the Israelites were with a priesthood, it might have been thought that they would feel their obligations as regarded their God in a great measure fulfilled. And we need not have been astonished if, as we see so often among the uncivilised nations of our time, the nation itself had left the priesthood very much alone in their religious worship. There is always a tendency, in countries where the priest-class is very distinct, to let the distinction run into all matters. But this was not so with the Jewish nation. Their religion did not expend itself only in tithes and offerings, whereby they might have felt that they were merely providing their priest-brethren with means of subsistence; but out of their own number were found men who desired to be in their lives and to themselves what the priests were in the Sanctuary. These were the Nazirites,¹ those who 'separated themselves' by a special vow to be holy to Jehovah in life and work.

LAWS RESPECTING THE NAZIRITE.

The term 'Nazirite' properly signifies one who is cut off or separated. And such the Nazirite truly was. A priest in the Sanctuary during the period of his vow, he must, so long as that vow was upon him, consecrate himself unto the Lord; and

¹ 'Nazarites'; Numb. vi., etc.; a word which has been mistaken by some as derived from the same root as *Nazareth* (netser, branch). The words, however, are quite distinct, and the spelling *Nazirite* adopted in the Revised Version, indicates the true origin of the word from *nazir*, 'separated.'

as the priest on duty must abstain from wine, so must the Nazirite 'separate himself from wine and strong drink.' Nay, further, he must not even *seem* to be of the number of those who enjoyed the wine that 'maketh glad the heart of man,' for he must touch nothing that came of the vine, or was concerned with it, no vinegar of wine or strong drink, 'nor eat fresh grapes or dried . . . nothing that is made of the grapevine, from the kernels even to the husk.' Thus would the Nazirite always be in a fitting frame of mind, his brain unclouded, and his heart not lifted up, to do whatever work God had in store from him, as St. James puts it, 'unspotted from the world.'

The second thing that was forbidden to the Nazirite was the use of the razor, either for face or head. At first sight this seems a curious prohibition, as it was neither esteemed a kingly thing to wear the hair long, nor do the Jews seem to have had any special way of wearing it. But this apparent insignificance of the hair is not in reality as marked as we think it. Putting aside such passages as Jer. vii. 29, where the hair is spoken of as the crown, and the fact that baldness was undoubtedly considered a reproach,¹ it was very necessary that the Nazirite should possess some outward token whereby all might know he was in a different relationship to God from most men. Some writers have gone even farther, and set it down as only worthy of a God-dedicated person to give what was natural, and, so to speak, unartificial. At any rate, it was with his hair, *i.e.*, with it in its Nazirite growth, that the strength of Samson was bound up; and it is curious to note that with the growth again of his locks, his strength so returned that he slew at his death more than in all his life.

The third prohibition laid on the Nazirite cut him off, in some measure, from family life. For, all the days that he separated himself, he must 'come at no dead body.' Neither father nor mother, brother nor sister, was to be mourned in the

¹ 2 Kings ii. 23.

ordinary way ; though it seems probable, by the way in which the prohibition is couched, that mourning would be allowed for wife or child. But in very truth, for the Nazirite, for the time at any rate, no family existed. He must be ready for any work, to renounce anything, to undergo any privation. And it was in this sense that Christ was Himself a Nazirite ; but unlike again in this, that whereas the touch of a dead body defiled a Nazirite, the touch of the Great Nazirite brought back life to the dead. And whereas for the ancient Nazirite everything ordinary was unclean, by the touch of Christ everything ordinary became consecrated, fit for use in the great world-family.

THE TWO CLASSES.

There were two kinds of Nazirite : he who had vowed himself for a time, whether shorter or longer, and he who was a Nazirite for life, utterly given up to God. The latter class is not even mentioned in the Nazirite institutions.¹ Very few belonged to it—Samuel, Samson, John the Baptist—children vowed even before their birth. But to the former class many would belong of both sexes, for it was quite lawful for a woman to separate herself, and even in the Rabbinic law rules are laid down for her guidance. The temporary Nazirite undertook the three vows ; and in case of any person dying near him suddenly, or in view of an accidental defilement by contact with a dead body, a special sacrifice and ceremony was appointed, to be undergone before the Nazirite could re-enter on his self-imposed work. But even after this sacrifice it was only like again starting from the beginning, for ‘the days that were before shall be lost, because his separation was defiled.’

The length of a Nazirite vow was purely optional, though later tradition laid it down that it must be for a period not less than thirty days. At the close of the period the Nazirite must be brought to the door of the Sanctuary, and there must be

¹ Numb. vi.

offered for him a lamb of the first year, a ewe lamb, a ram, a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour, mingled with oil. The lambs offered were to atone for any sins unwittingly committed by him during the time of his Nazirate, the male as a burnt offering. The cakes and unleavened bread were drink offerings and thank offerings; indeed, the whole sacrifice was one of joy, and as such specially distinguished from ordinary peace and thank offerings. After these sacrifices had been presented, the Nazirite must shave his head, the hair of which was presented before God, part consumed under the peace offering, the rest waved before the Lord with the waved shoulder of the ram, an unleavened cake, and an unleavened wafer. After this the Nazirite was clear of his vow, and might drink wine.

SANCTITY OF THE NAZIRITES.

To the Jew, in all ages, a Nazirite was in truth a holy person. If the passage in Lamentations iv. 7 refers to the Nazirites, as in the ordinary version, and not to the 'nobles' of Judah (R.V.) as also 'separated ones,' an interesting glimpse is given us of their outward aspect—the sign of a temperate and devoted life:—'Her Nazirites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk; They were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing was of sapphire.' In the prophecy of Amos¹ it is made a reproach against the unfaithful Israelites that they tempted the Nazirites to break their vows. This was evidently a sacrilege of no ordinary kind. At a much later period in the history, in the troublous days of the Maccabees, some were to be found² who could be stirred up, and made to resent the idolatry which had been forced upon their brethren. But it was in the days of the Judges that the Nazirites Samson and Samuel swayed the people.³ At the best they were but extraordinary motors, whose individuality, though leaving its mark on the men of their time, could never hope to create a race, or have any after them like them.

¹ Amos ii. 11, 12. ² 1 Macc. iii. 49. ³ Judges xiii. 5; 1 Sam. i. 11.

PERSONS UNDER VOW.

Vows and oaths, again, were common enough among the Jews, as indeed they are among all nations. The causes for such vows are not far to find. In danger it is a natural instinct to make a vow or promise; again, as a means of propitiating a powerful Deity it is not uncommon. These motives may be mean; but after all it is for men in their natural, rude, unaware moments that rules must be laid down, and God Himself, by Moses, recognised the instinct and authorised the offering of vows as a matter of religion.¹ At the same time Moses laid it down that it was no sin of omission not to vow; only, if a vow had once gone out of the lips, it was sin not to keep it. Even the vow of a daughter, or a wife, if heard and not opposed in the day it was uttered, must be respected. Again, no man had a right to vow anything that was not altogether and wholly his own; nor might money gained by unholy transactions, from improper persons, be brought into the Sanctuary for the payment of a vow. The vow payable was termed *neder*, and was regarded as a holy gift to God, and since it was so holy, should not be rashly undertaken. The things vowed seem to fall into three classes:

1. Persons. These might be vowed, either as Nazirites, or as a sacrifice. In the latter case they were redeemable for a certain price, varying according to age and the ability to pay of the vower.

2. Houses. These were to be valued by the priest, and redeemed by the vower, with one-fifth added to its market value.

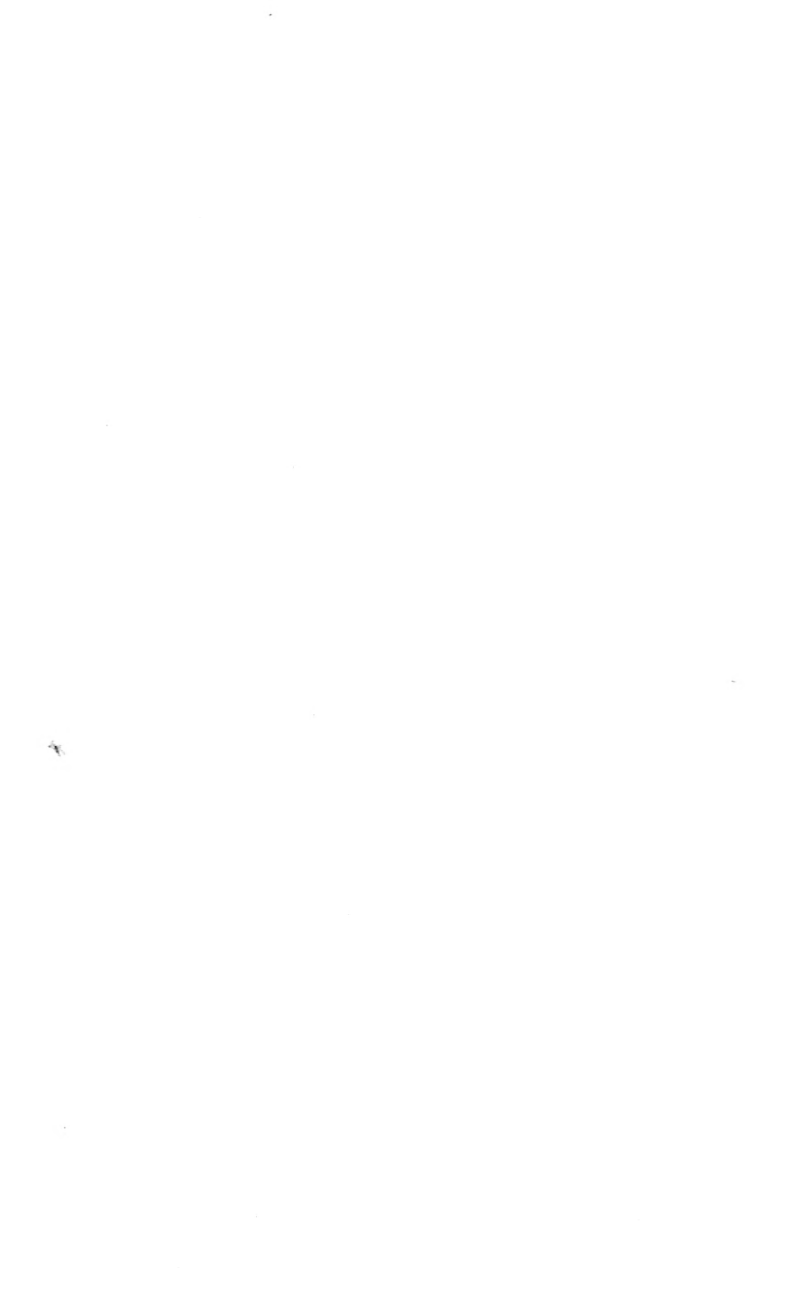
3. Property in Land. When land was vowed it was considered that it was not the ground itself that was vowed, as that was the inalienable property of the family, but what the land produced. And this obligation even came to an end at the next Year of Jubilee.

Firstborns, both of men and animals, as already by right belonging to God, might not be vowed.

¹ See Lev. xxvii.

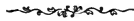
Another kind of oath was the *issar*, a kind of dedicatory thanksgiving to God for mercies received. Another, again, was the ban, by which the thing devoted to God might never be redeemed, but if devoted for death, must be put to death; if devoted as a place, might never be rebuilt; if for punishment, must suffer it; if under God's wrath, must be put out of the congregation. Very solemn and terrible was this ban, *cherem*, a thing to be dreaded, immovable in its course. The excommunications and terrors of the Church were but faint echoes of what to the devoted Israelite the terrors of the ban must have been. In truth, to such there would remain 'no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation.' For the renegade Jew it was 'a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.' But Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, and by Him there is now no separation between classes and nations as holy and 'unclean:' unholy, for the kingdom of God is holy, of which kingdom all are.

PART II.
Holy Worship.



PART II.

Holy Worship.



CHAPTER I.

Sacrifices.

TO a mocking nineteenth century reader the term 'Mosaic Ritual' conjures up a vision of beasts endlessly being sacrificed, an altar continually dripping with blood, mingled smoke of burning flesh and incense going up in a thick cloud to an angry God, who requires from those He Himself has placed in peril a perfection utterly beyond the reach of man. Even the student of Bible history, better informed than such an one, has often, we venture to think, a very false and degrading notion of the value and place of sacrifices in the Mosaic legislation. The subject is one that has been plentifully discussed; volumes without number have been written on it, and still we can but say that the best informed has only a very partial, and consequently very unfair, knowledge of the matter. And yet, as sacrifices form the grand centre point, the hinge on which it turns, the keystone of the whole structure, it is a thing to be lamented that the knowledge of the few has not been extended to the many.

To begin with, it must be borne in mind that it is a question on which Scripture throws no direct light, whether the notion of sacrifices being necessary or pleasing to God resulted from any actual Divine commandment. Some theologians, indeed, see in the 'skins' with which the transgressors were clothed on their banishment from Paradise, a sign of an already

prescribed and accepted sin offering. Else why were animals slain; no grant of flesh for food having already been given? But this reasoning is precarious. In the Garden of Eden there was no idea of sacrifice, as indeed how could there be, since the union between God and man was so perfect? What is certain is, that many years afterwards, when both Cain and Abel had attained manhood, we read of both these two bringing a '*minchah*' (literally, a present) to the Lord. Have we not here the key to the significance of this first recorded offering? A 'present,' to be truly acceptable and valuable, should be a *spontaneous* act, the value of which depends on the disposition with which it was offered, as well as upon the meaning which the giver puts into it. Abel's gift meant much, not simply because of its intrinsic value—the choicest of the flock—but because it expressed the truth which was to lie at the basis of all sacrificial institutions, that *life* must be surrendered to God. And more, the life is given through suffering and death. Is there not here the *sinner's* feeling after God, the anticipation, however dim, of the mystery of atonement? God accepted the gift, not as brought in obedience to His command, but because it was willingly brought, and because it embodied the true spirit of sacrifice. Cain's bloodless altar expressed no such deep thoughts. It was an elegant but a heartless oblation; and God would not receive it at his hands. Whether the declaration¹ that Abel's sacrifice was 'more abundant' than Cain's because of *faith*, implies that he had already understood and grasped the promise of a coming Redeemer, is an interesting question, but one on which Scripture makes no definite statement. It is fairly argued that as faith implies the belief in testimony, there must have been some word of revelation on which Abel rested.

Pursuing the history of sacrifices still further, we find Noah, on coming out of the Ark, offering the first burnt offering. Here the expression first occurs: 'And the Lord smelled a sweet savour' (or 'a savour of rest'), which deserves consideration

¹ Heb. xi. 4: see Bishop Westcott on the passage.

Not that, as the Psalmist points out, God has need of the flesh of bulls and goats, far from it; but that the Deity was thought of in such an intimate way ('not in heaven, nor far off'), that the attributes of a human being were literally ascribed to Him, and He could be represented as being pleased or displeased with the homage paid to Him by His creatures. After the Noachic covenant, the idea of a live sacrifice, except on very special occasions, seems to have receded. Altars were erected, certainly, but mostly as places of prayer; and it is only on great solemnities, such as the making of the covenant with Abraham, that parts of a slaughtered animal are spoken of. And that even in those days a sacrifice, living or otherwise, was not always intended to convey to the patriarchal mind the idea of atonement or propitiation appears from this: that Abraham is instructed by God, in very distinct terms which cover all the reason of the act, to offer up his only well-beloved son Isaac. By such a deed no guilt could have been removed from the father's head, and his unquestioning obedience would still further prove how in accordance with the Divine will was his own wish. Whence, then, the undoubted element of expiation and propitiation in the Mosaic sacrificial ritual? This question will be best answered by a study of the different kinds of sacrifice, with the reasons attached to their existence.

SACRIFICES: THEIR KIND AND QUALITY.

On the surface, great care was required in the *quality* of the sacrifice. Everything must be of the very best; nothing diseased or faulty or not really valuable, could be offered. Further, as regards the limits set to the *kind* of sacrifice. The animals offered must not be wild, got by chance, or rare on that account; but those domestic animals which were of most value, those, in fact, which formed the ground of the nation's wealth. As regarded bloodless 'gifts,' these must be of fruits which require the greatest care in cultivation, the olive, whose pressed oil was so precious in every Eastern home, wine most carefully prepared, cakes and bread made under special orders.

On the other hand, among the forbidden gifts we find some which seem passing strange. For example, honey is forbidden; but for this prohibition the reason is assigned that honey has a fermenting, decomposing power, and that in this way it ranks along with leaven, which, except in one solitary instance, had no place in the preparation of sacrificial offerings. Again, the fire for consuming the sacrifices must not be ordinary fire; it too was holy, and might not be neglected or put aside for any other. For it was the eternal fire, for ever smouldering on the altar, that alone might be used to consume the sacrifices, that fire which each morning the priest renewed from what was left overnight, according to the command: 'The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out.'¹ This was common to many other of the religions of antiquity, and in the Mosaic legislation at any rate, signified that everything connected with the approach to the Divine must be guarded and fenced off from what was ordinary. There was one instance always before the eyes of the Israelite, of sharp judgment which overtook two sons of Aaron for offering a 'strange' sacrifice. In view of that, not a Jew would venture to offer his gift in any but the appointed way; indeed, so holy was the fire deemed, that, according to legend, it was preserved during the captivity by the instrumentality of the prophet Jeremiah in a cave, and afterwards restored to its place on the altar.² What the fire was meant to symbolise was, in the case of a sin offering, the wrath of God consuming the substitute ('our God is a consuming fire'); in other cases God's love and kindly favour to His people.³ Rightly, then, it was not 'common.'

SACRIFICE: ITS METHODS AND ACCOMPANIMENTS.

Another point in the offering of sacrifices, bloody in this case, was the manner of slaying, and then of placing the various parts on the altar. Starting from the idea that the life of the animal was seated in its blood, the sacrificial animal, which was to be regarded as the equivalent of its offerer, must

¹ Lev. vi. 13. ² See 1 Macc. ii. 1-13. ³ Comp. Cant. viii. 6, 7.

not only be so killed that its blood, the *caplar* or sin-covering part, could be duly sprinkled on and around the altar, but the animal itself must be divided into stated portions, and in some sacrifices wholly burnt, in others only a part consumed, while the rest was partaken of by priests alone, or by priests and laymen, according to the different ways in which the sacrifice had its meaning; one way for sin, another for the burnt and trespass offerings, etc. This laying upon the altar and presentation before the Divine has always been an important detail in the sacrifices of the human race, and is not only peculiar to the Jew.

Again, we have to notice the presence of *salt* in the sacrificial rules laid down. According to Lev. ii. 13, 'every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.' The reasons for this command are not difficult to find. Not only is salt the great preserver from decay, but in those Eastern countries it was the token of friendship, of a covenant so true that to break it was impossible. It was also the mark of the guest, and signified that the once interrupted communion was re-established between the great Father and His children. Fitting then was it that the most sacred token of friendship between man and man should be transferred into the symbolism of the Jewish worship.

REASON OF SACRIFICE.

Having thus briefly enumerated the salient points common to most, if not all sacrifices, we are now in a position to examine more closely into the question: why the sacrifice was the method which the Jews, clearly directed, at any rate after the Mosaic legislation, were bidden to use as most pleasing to God.

Here we must begin by drawing the lines a little more closely. It is evident from what has already been adduced, that first, the feeling that this was a fitting way of approach arose in man's own mind—under what impulses of Divine

inspiration it is impossible to decide. Further, that up to the time of the Exodus the prominent feature in the sacrifices was not propitiation, but thanksgiving. It marks a higher stage in the development of the human race, where man begins to feel with a definiteness of conviction far beyond any vague stirrings of conscience, that there is a barrier between himself and the Divine, when rising from ignorant joy for favours received he feels himself unworthy to receive those very favours. Not quite analogous, though apparently so, is the offering of human sacrifices by savage nations. Here there would be a feeling of bloody vengeance, of wrath and anger clamouring to be satisfied; different, utterly different from the reverential and penitential approach of the offerer among the Jews, conscious of favours showered, conscious of his own unworthiness, conscious that out of the over-abundant store he owes the best and choicest to the great Giver. That is one aspect of the sacrificial code. But there is another, far more solemn and mysterious, a mystery which even the angels might desire to look into. That is: how the sacrifice was not only an avowal of guilt and unworthiness, but an actual atonement and propitiation for sins and offences committed. Here the Epistle to the Hebrews is very explicit: 'For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins';¹ but that He who came to do God's will, He had grasped the idea of sacrifice. Not in blood, nor in bloody and bloodless offerings, but in the subordination, the surrender of the will to God, did He take pleasure. And this was the use of sacrifices: that by offering them the offerer sought to transfer his will and inclination into the animal, which was thus his representative, and by its inferiority to his own self marked his standing as regarded God. This transference of personality into the animal was, of course, only fit for a child-stage of perception of Divine truths. True, the patriarchs were not advanced enough for this; but, on the other hand, the idea of the power of passing one's responsibility into an unreasoning creature would not synchronise with the

¹ Heb. x. 4.

Christian Church. It is one of those things that decay and wax old, and so are 'ready to vanish away.' That is, viewed in its symbolic aspect, wherein first the priest was the medium of the Divine, and secondly, the animal the medium of the offerer; and wherein each act marked the different processes in the mind, the bringing signifying the desire to approach God, the hand-laying the transference of will and desire into the sacrifice, the slaying, not murder, but a surrender of the life to the Giver, and the placing in order on the altar of whole or parts of the animal signified reverence and care, the sprinkling the atonement made; and as one writer quaintly remarks: to the offerer, after the Mosaic legislation, there was one point which was wanting in pre-Mosaic times—the certainty that each offerer could feel that, offered in the right way as it necessarily must be, his sacrifice was sure of acceptance. Carrying the symbolism still further, by the very fact that a man offered part, it was an easy inference that the whole was really alienated from God. In this connection it is curious to note that flowers, so commonly presented among the nations both in olden and in modern times, find no place among the permitted gifts. It would even seem¹ that the fruits permitted to be brought could only be laid down near the altar. May this not mean that, whereas the great vital principle, the blood, was to be poured out on the altar, that which made this life pleasant, its fruits and flowers, were not to be needlessly snatched away from man, but that if out of his abundance he gave what was a fitting acknowledgment, it was to be viewed as a free gift, not as a duty?

JEHOVAH A SHARER IN THE SACRIFICE.

As regards the share their great King took in the sacrifices offered to Him, it seems that to the patriarchal Israelite it was like presenting Him with food (*lechem Elohim*); or if incense, with presenting Him with a sweet savour. But it was only in very ancient times that such ideas could

¹ Comp. Lev. ii. 12.

prevail, fitted to the days when the Lord was entertained by Abraham, or manifested His secret purposes to him. Rather did it to the Jew under the law seem that he, by doing all in his power, was showing that in so much as in him lay, he was in accordance with God's will. And, viewed sacramentally, the sacrifice-stage of man's development is even now not a thing of the past. And the sacrifice of thanksgiving and of self-dedication which the Church of Christ now offers is also the mark that this is not her rest.

SACRIFICE AS A SYMBOL.

The *typical* aspect of sacrifices is the one with which we are all most familiar. Strange indeed it often seems that the Jew of the time of Christ did not, could not, perceive this. But in truth for him the typical side of sacrifices had no existence. He could understand their symbolism, he *felt* what he was doing in offering a sacrifice; more than that, he must have felt that the constant inferiority of his substitute left a wide margin of offences for which there was no chance of remission. To the Jew, again, of the present era, with his eyes opened by the rapidly rolling-on world, carried by it, alone, with no patriotic feelings of pride in present possession to sustain him, there is nothing left but, the symbols of his faith being shattered, to lose all creeds and merely cling to a name. But to the Christian Church the word 'sacrifice' has only one grandest meaning, one personal application to the Great Person, the Great Sacrifice, the Great Atonement. Herein lies the point and gist of the whole ceremonial law: it was to bring to Him that the Jew required this law, ritual as well as ethical, as a 'schoolmaster.' And it is thus that, 'having learnt Christ,' His Church can offer their 'bodies, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is their reasonable (or spiritual) service.'

THE MAIN DIVISION OF SACRIFICES.

Examining more particularly what commentators term the 'materials for sacrifice,' we must first divide the offerings into

bloody and bloodless sacrifices. Of the former there were at least five common kinds: the burnt offering, oldest of all, the thank offering, sin offering, trespass offering, while a large number of sacrifices might be classed under a fifth head, as those for special occasions. The classification of Professor Kurtz will be found very convenient and suggestive. By combining the sin and trespass offerings as expressing the same essential idea, he groups the whole in three divisions.

1. Sin offerings and trespass offerings, the chief typical act in which was the *sprinkling of the blood*.

2. Burnt offerings, the chief characteristic of which was the *entire burning upon the altar*. These offerings were the earliest: of which (1) and (3) may be considered as modifications, each with a new thought added, of supreme importance.

3. Peace offerings, in which the new feature was *the sacrificial meal*, expressive of communion with God.

Thus the several kinds of bleeding sacrifice embody respectively the great theological realities of EXPIATION, CONSECRATION, and FELLOWSHIP.

The greater part of these bloody sacrifices were accompanied by a bloodless one, *minchah*, a gift, consisting mainly in wheat prepared in the form of cakes, flour, or bruised corn, together with oil and incense. As regarded the animals to be offered, they are described very explicitly. They are bulls and cows, sheep and goats, doves and pigeons. This order also marks the significance, or greater and lesser guilt felt to be atoned. Fish were not contemplated as being available for sacrifice, as indeed seems to have been common to many other nations.

From the whole of the materials for worship being summed up in such a small compass it will be noted, that (1) the Jew was quite capable of doing his homage in the wilderness; (2) that what was pleasing to God was not what was to be brought from far, or unattainable by any but the rich, but what was most necessary to daily life was to be given; (3) that worship was really communion and fellowship

in this daily life ; (4) that the Jew would best fulfil his destiny by a long life in agriculture in the land God had given him.

True, this ritual of sacrifices marked that Israel was still in a very early stage of life. And it is curious to note how even after the laws had been laid down, and a central place of worship appointed, how even then the faithful in the land, such as Manoh, do not seem to have scrupled to bring a sacrifice at their own homes. Further, the priests themselves appear to have often been quite unworthy of their position, and to have taken advantage of it to do deeds infamous or nefarious (comp. the sons of Eli, and the intrigues of the priests in the days of David and Solomon). Still, the system was a grand one, with a grand meaning, both typical and symbolic, and certainly far surpassed that conceived by any other nation of antiquity. And though Jehovah's chief requirement was not that of sacrifice, and His most acceptable one was a broken and contrite spirit,¹ yet it must have been very refreshing to the penitent to feel that, instead of thick clouds and darkness enwrapping the Divine, there was a way always open, by blood certainly, but by blood not wasted, only diverted from its ordinary use. Still, though he knew it not, there would in course of time be a more excellent way, when *the* Sacrifice had been offered once for all, when there was no more remembrance of sins made every year, but when the way into the Holiest should be made manifest, and we able to enter where the Forerunner has already entered for us.

Again, it was not alone for consuming on the altar that all sacrifices were brought. Some, indeed, were wholly consumed ; these were ' most holy ' (*kodesh kodashim*). Others, however, were only partially burnt, and these (*kodesh*) were partaken of by the priests, in some instances also by their families ; in others, the offerer himself had a share. In all cases, however, it must be remembered that the sacrifice was a gift, a voluntary gift ; as well as, if not more than, an obligation.

¹ Comp. Psa. li. 16, ' Thou delightest not in sacrifice,' etc. ; Psa. l. 12 ; Jer. vii. 22, etc.

We can now proceed to examine the offerings in detail, always bearing in mind (1) that to the Jew it was the symbolic side which most presented itself ; and (2) that to the Christian Church the symbolic side is as full of instruction now, as the typical side has hitherto been shown to be.

CHAPTER II.

Burnt Offering. Meat Offering. Drink Offering.

I. THE BURNT OFFERING.

THE Book of Leviticus, with which we naturally connect the ceremonial law, opens with the ritual for the Burnt Offering, the oldest and in some senses the most comprehensive of all the sacrifices.

To begin with its name: What we in English call the 'burnt offering' is in Hebrew *'olah*, 'ascending,' which would naturally point to the ascending smoke and burning. The LXX. translate the term *ὁλοκαύτωμα* (Vulgate, *holocaustum*), but, as one writer points out, this refers to its intention, not its meaning. Again, as belonging to the class of sacrifices which were wholly consumed on the altar, it was *kalil*, 'whole offering.' The real force of the term *'olah*' seems to lie in this, that as the sacrifice rose before the presence of Jehovah, then was it acceptable.¹

The history of burnt offering, or rather, the rudimentary idea of sacrifice to be wholly given and consumed, dates from very early times. Writers trace like observances among the Syrians, the Phœnicians, the Carthaginians, the Greeks, even the Romans; and it is curious to note that, wherever burnt offerings were common, it was the practice to slay the males, and keep the females. The reasons for this are different. Among the Jews it was the feeling that, the male being the finer and more valuable animal, by so doing they were offering God of their very best; among other nations again, the female

¹ 'They shall come up with acceptance on Mine altar,' Isa. lx. 7.

was either the holier of the two, or to be spared on account of her milk, etc.

Again, the Jew had this idea in common with other peoples, that by wholly consuming his sacrifice he was placing before God a meal in which no human being was to have a share ; but unlike them, even in those cases where he did partake of a portion of the sacrifices, it by no means resembled the orgies or sacrificial meals in which the ancient heathen world delighted. So the few points the Jew had in common with heathenism really only served to point out how very far he was removed from them in purpose, and even in act.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BURNT OFFERING.

Next, as regarded its meaning, though, in common with all bloody sacrifices, it had the basis of expiation, yet this was, after all, only a subordinate idea. The grand purpose of the burnt offering was adoration. In it the offerer presented his life (blood), his strength (bones), his beauty and grace (the arrangement of the pieces), and as it was daily offered, this was a daily dedication of the whole nation to God. To the pious in Israel it was a sign of thanksgiving,¹ even of supplication and entreaty. So not only every day, but on all feasts and solemn occasions, the burnt offering was present ; though on some of these great days, before the congregation could give itself up wholly to adoration, the sense of overwhelming guilt was first of all expressed in the sin offering. Otherwise the burnt offering had precedence of every other.

That the chief object of the burnt offering was not expiation, appears also in the fact that, while the blood of the sin and trespass offering was sprinkled in one particular spot, that of the burnt offering was merely sprinkled round the base of the altar, as was also done for the thank offerings. But again, the mere mention of the *blood* shows that death was even in

¹ 'I will go into Thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay Thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble,' Psa. lxxvi. 13, 14.

this, the most perfect of offerings, a necessary ingredient in the ritual of that law which to so many was a 'savour of death unto death.'

Though more particularly intended to mark that the offerer was one within the covenant, still it would seem that, by the fact of bringing it, even a heathen, a Gentile, shared in the benefits of the chosen people. Thus, we find Jethro, the Midianite, when bringing Moses' wife and sons back to him, taking a burnt offering and sacrifices, after which the elders of Israel, considering him as one with themselves, ate 'bread with him before God.'¹ In later days it was the custom for pious heathens to have burnt offerings presented for them in the Temple; and it is an historical fact that the cessation of the daily sacrifices offered for Nero in the Temple at Jerusalem was the sign that the last Jewish war had broken out.²

ANIMALS PRESCRIBED FOR THE BURNT OFFERING.

The animals used for the burnt offering might be :— 1. The bullock, universally regarded as the finest animal sacrifice, as may be seen by comparing the passages where it was brought as a gift of great value (by the princes in Numb. vii., etc.). In the ritual in Leviticus this bullock is termed *ben boker*, son of the herd, *i.e.*, young, in contradistinction to a calf, and also to the older animal. 2. Of sheep: a ram without blemish. This it was that was the daily burnt offering for Israel. 3. Of fowls: turtle doves or young pigeons. These were not very much offered, mostly in cases where the means of the offerer would not allow of animal sacrifice. But the mere fact that they were offered at all marks a difference from the heathen world, where in so many instances doves were sacred, and not looked upon as sacrificial at all. It is also somewhat curious that the Jews, as a nation, were noted for rearing doves. It is probable that doves were selected out of all others because of their smallness, and the care required in providing them food.

The young bullock having been chosen, it was brought by

¹ Exod. xviii. 12.

² Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* ii. 17, 2.

the offerer to the door of the Tent of Meeting, and there the offerer laid his hand heavily (*samach*, rested upon), supporting it, on the head of the animal. The meaning of this ceremony, which appears in so many other sacrifices, was, that the offerer put something in common between himself and his sacrifice; that he gave over to it part of the object for which he had come, and made it an accessory in the act. And by so doing he, the offerer, consecrated the animal for his own work. Upon this follows in the ritual the typical meaning of this act; subordinate, as we have seen, to its chief idea of adoration: 'and it shall be accepted for him (*lecapper 'alaiiv*), to cover him,' *i.e.*, be a 'wedding garment' for him against the holiness, dreadful as it was, of God.

RITUAL OF THE BURNT OFFERING.

The animal was next slain by the offerer, at the appointed place, on the north side of the great altar of burnt offering; and now began the real ceremonial part, when the priests or Levites shared in the sacrifice. As the Jews were taught that the life, the seat of vital energy, was in the blood, it was a natural step to lay it down that what was given by God should be wholly dedicated to Him, and therefore forbidden to be eaten as food. So in the burnt offering the blood was caught as it streamed out by the priests, and sprinkled all round the altar, that is, given to the whole Sanctuary of God. Next, the offerer himself skinned the sacrifice (which skin belonged to himself afterwards), and divided it limb from limb, *i.e.*, did not hack it, but cut it up symmetrically. Meanwhile the priests were preparing the altar, arranging it to receive the sacrifice, which done, the priests placed the pieces on the piled wood, first the head—even in other countries looked upon as a particular part—and then the fat round the entrails, while the entrails themselves, washed in water, were next placed on the altar, and finally the legs, from the knee to the foot, and the whole burnt. And thus was Israel taught that before anything they gave could be accepted by their Father in heaven,

it must go up to heaven in smoke, that which reaches farthest, as a sweet-smelling oblation, one which while reminding man of what was most pleasant and good to support life, pointed upwards to God as the consummation and giver of that very life.

For the sacrifice of a dove, usually brought by the poor, the ritual was necessarily somewhat different. The bird was brought by the offerer to the priest, who wrenched off its head with his finger and nail, and then burnt this on the altar; next the crop and intestines were plucked off and thrown among the ashes on the east side of the altar, while the blood was pressed out and let run down the east side of the altar, as marking, so one writer points out, that even though it was not enough to equal that of the four-footed animals sprinkled round, yet it should not be poured out at the base, as if not worthy, but, as much as in it lay, dedicated to God. This done, the priest separated partially, but not entirely, the wings from the body, that to some extent the bird should be divided, as in the animal sacrifice, but not entirely, as in that case quite useless for the meal or feast it was supposed to represent. And as the smoke of this 'poor' offering went up to heaven, it also was a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord.

2. THE MEAT OFFERING.

In the order which we at present follow, that of our Book of Leviticus, the meat offering (*minchah*, a gift, present) is next laid down. This meat offering was not of animal food, as its usual name might lead some readers to suppose,¹ but a vegetable offering, the vegetable world being likewise considered as belonging to God. But not a vegetable offering in its natural state: it must be of 'fine flour,' explained as meaning flour made of carefully roasted and ground corn, fresh ears, and when so prepared it must be poured over with oil,

¹ It will be unnecessary to remind students of English that the word *meat* has nothing to do with flesh. It means 'food' simply.

seasoned with salt, and sprinkled with incense. Very felicitously, therefore, our Bible Revisers have changed the term meat offering into *meal offering*, removing a possible cause of error by the smallest possible alteration. As enumerated in the law, the *minchah* or meat offering, falls into two classes:—

1. The *minchah* which was offered by itself alone.

2. The *minchah* which accompanied some other and greater sacrifice.

The first class would evidently reproduce the original idea of man, that of themselves vegetable sacrifices were just as pleasing to the Almighty as animal sacrifices; but even here it is curious to mark how very seldom the *minchah* appears by itself. The principal occasions were the following:—

(a) For the high priests' meat offering.¹ In after years tradition laid it down that the high priest must offer this meat offering daily for himself and his house, out of his own private means.² This offering was consumed in part, and the remainder eaten in the holy place.

(b) For the trial of jealousy.³ The husband of the suspected wife brought the tenth part of an ephah of barley. But this sacrifice was neither anointed with oil nor with incense, for this reason: that it was 'an offering of jealousy, an offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance.' And, as such, it was not fitting that the symbols of peace and worship should be present.

(c) For the extremely poor in Israel, a man who was not able to bring even two pigeons as a sin offering, it was lawful to bring the tenth part of an ephah of flour for a sin offering; but as here also the idea of sin was present, the offerer might put neither oil nor incense.⁴

(d) The wave sheaf, which was presented 'on the morrow after the Sabbath' during the Feast of Passover.⁵ This was accompanied by its own particular meat offering and its drink offering.

¹ Lev. vi. 14, etc.

² *Ant.* iii. 10, 7.

³ Numb. v. 15

⁴ Lev. v. 11.

⁵ Lev. xxiii. 10, etc.

(e) The 'wave loaves' at the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost). On this feast the meat offering (a 'new' one) was leavened, and formed the *raison d'être*, so to speak, of the Feast. As being a thanksgiving for daily bread, it was leavened, and 'new' because the first of the new harvest.

(f) To this list of meat offerings presented alone we should add the shewbread, constantly before the Lord, and not to be eaten by any but His chosen priests.

These *minchah* sacrifices excepted, in nearly all the other cases the meat offering was accessory and subordinate to the animal sacrifice. But here again we find many and differing descriptions of meat offering, both as regards the quantity of the ingredients and the manner of preparing them. The following quite distinct kinds are enumerated in the Pentateuch.

1. *Challah*: 'Unleavened cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour,' Lev. vii. 12; viii. 26, etc. These were cakes mixed with oil, and afterwards sprinkled with the same. Such were used at the consecration of Aaron and his sons. Incense was mixed in them, Lev. ii. 1-3.

2. *Challah*: Unleavened cakes baked in the oven. These were kneaded with oil, and were probably about the thickness of the hand, perhaps perforated with small holes from the oven in which it was baked, as is a common kind among the Arabs of the present day, Lev. ii. 4.

3. Cakes mixed with oil, and baked on a flat round, probably iron, plate (*machabath*) over the fire, Lev. ii. 5. This is to the present day a thoroughly Arab way of baking cakes. But this kind of meat offering could only be presented broken, not cut, in small pieces, so as to make them appear more like a meal, and with oil poured over in addition to that with which it was kneaded.

4. Boiled pudding-like cakes, according to some, and pancakes according to others. They would seem to be cakes baked in a mould (*marchesheth*), of course without leaven, and mixed with oil, Lev. ii. 7.

5. Dried and rubbed, or bruised, ears of green corn, with oil and incense added, Lev. ii. 14, 15.

6. The offering in the trial of jealousy was of a tenth part of an ephah of meal, like many other meat offerings; but unlike them, neither oil nor incense was added.

7. Wafers, unleavened, anointed with oil, Lev. vii. 12.

The quantity of meal in the meat offerings which accompanied other sacrifices is given as follows.¹ We also give the accompanying drink offerings:—

1. For the ordinary sacrifice, such as burnt offerings, vows, freewill offerings, feasts and Sabbaths: a tenth part of an ephah of flour mixed with the fourth part of a hin of oil. Drink offering: a fourth of a hin of wine.

2. For a ram: two-tenths of flour and one-third of a hin of oil. Drink offering: one-third of a hin of wine.

3. Bullock for peace offering or vows: three-tenths of an ephah of flour and half a hin of oil. Drink offering: half a hin of wine.

These meat offerings chiefly accompanied such sacrifices as the daily ones, those for Sabbaths and feasts, the presenting of the wave sheaf, the two Pentecost cakes; the sacrifice for sin unwittingly committed by the congregation,² the offering of the Nazirite at the close of his period of separation;³ that for thanksgiving.⁴ In fact, so almost entirely did the meat offering accompany a bloody sacrifice, that it strikes us as having a special significance that at the thanksgiving after child-birth there is no mention of a meat offering.⁵

RITUAL OF THE MEAT OFFERING.

When the *minchah* had been presented in the Tabernacle, only a small portion was consumed on the altar, as *azkarah*, *i.e.*, remembrance, memorial; the remainder was 'most holy' (*sanctissima*), and belonged to the priests. The expression *azkarah*, is a most forcible one. As the sweet smell of the

¹ Numb. xv. 1, etc.

² Numb. xv. 24.

³ Numb. vi. 13-20.

⁴ Lev. vii. 12-14.

⁵ Lev. xii.

meal, oil, and incense ascended to heaven, the presenter of the *minchah* came, so to speak, before God's presence and memory; and as atonement is not the idea or the foundation of the *minchah*, the memorial could be sweet and fragrant. The offerer was bringing what must have cost him, personally, much labour, and in that respect it surpassed the burnt offering, which might have been easily purchased even on the way to the Sanctuary. It was a mark of gratitude for daily bread, of heavenly aspirations and longings for the better bread from heaven. It was food pleasant to the taste and smell, and as seasoned with salt, free from decay. It was also the symbol of spiritual fruit, and this in a twofold sense; first, as regarded the offerer himself, as a mark of the fruits of the Spirit, in holiness of life, good works, righteousness, joy, and peace; and second, as regarded the effect of these good works on his neighbour, in kindness and charity; and it was in this sense also, as receivers of the bounty of the offerer, as well as representatives of the Divine, that the priests ate their share. And in the service of the Holy Communion in these days is the ancient meat offering of the Jewish world remembered, when 'in perfect charity with all men,' and offering and presenting 'ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee,' it is prayed that all may be fulfilled with God's grace and heavenly benediction. Thus the meat offering will have its meaning while the world endures.

3. DRINK OFFERINGS.

Little remains to be said of the drink offering, which so often accompanied the meat offering. It is curious here to note, that whereas the libations occupied so large a place in heathen worship, they seem foreign and altogether subordinate elements in the Jewish ritual. Indeed, the pouring out of wine is spoken of as part of the apostate religion of later Israel.¹ It would seem that the only part the drink offering fulfilled was in carrying out the ancient idea that the sacrifice

¹ Jer. xliv. 17.

was a meal, and as such must be provided with drink ; and so in the making of the table of shewbread drinking vessels were provided, though we do not read of their being put to any use. The altar of burnt offering alone received the drink offering, which then must not by any means be used by the priests,¹ but totally poured out at the base of the altar. In the later Temple two vessels were provided below the altar, into one of which the priest poured wine, into the other water, on the Feast of Tabernacles. Pouring water, indeed, would appear to have been a regular part of a special service, such as that called together by Samuel at Mizpah as a public humiliation and repentance.² But as part of the Mosaic ritual it is no water, but pure, good, old wine which is appointed, *shechar*, strong, intoxicating drink, *nesek*, what was poured out. Such are the names generally used. It must be remembered, however, that just as with offerings of birds no meat offering was presented, so in all cases where the *minchah* was absent the drink offering did not appear. Later Israel perceived, indeed, that God was no man to eat and drink, and that what He required was the broken and contrite heart. But for the religious education of Israel in the childhood of knowledge, the outward and visible was presented as a method of approach to the inward and the spiritual. And although even in ancient times the just could live by his faith, still the 'meats and drinks, and divers washings' were figures 'for the time then present,' when things were seen through a glass darkly, and known in part, until the fulness of time had come, and then seen face to face, and the Sun of Righteousness had risen with healing in His wings.

¹ See Lev. x. 9.

² 1 Sam. vii. 6.

CHAPTER III.

Sacrifices (*continued*): Peace-offerings.

QUITE different in scope and significance from the burnt offering, the great pattern of sacrifices, was the Peace offering, otherwise known as Thank offering (Luther, *Dankopfer*), freewill-offering, or peace meal-offering. Its name, *shelamim*, is a matter of controversy as regards meaning, some explaining it as meaning 'peace,' others 'reward' or 'payment,' others again 'satisfaction.' The first explanation would seem to be that commonly accepted.

The ritual, as given in Lev. iii., is of course minute and full of meaning; but, as in the other sacrifices, we shall have first to consider the offering in its general outline, and then briefly sum up the service, with the lessons it was meant to convey.

PEACE OFFERINGS IN EARLY TIMES.

The origin of peace offerings is lost in antiquity. That it was pre-Mosaic is beyond a doubt, likewise that it was a world-wide practice to offer this service in any nation either in times of difficulty and danger, or as thanksgiving for favours received. It resembled heathen sacrifices in this, that it was accompanied by what may almost be called a sacrificial meal, in which both priests and laity shared. This one characteristic is that which gives its stamp to the peace offering, and furnishes the keynote to its meaning.

To begin with, the idea of atonement or reconciliation with a justly offended Deity had become quite secondary. Rather,

we may say, the reconciliation was pre-supposed. As its name signified, the 'peace offering' was a mark of friendship, a sign of good feeling between God and man, not then begun, but cemented and carried on by the sharing in common of a meal, whereat God, the true Host of the world, condescended to partake as fellow-guest, of what had been prepared for and offered to Him. In the sacrifice, accordingly, the priests were not so much the medium or channel through which the offerer approached God, but His representatives, but even this in a peculiar sense, as they were also, so to speak, recipients of the bounty of their fellow-men. Further, to prove that to God nothing was unsuitable for sacrifice, it was ordained that the peace offering need not necessarily be a male, as was usually the case in the other sacrifices, but might be either male or female, of the herd or of the flock; nay, an animal which, otherwise healthy, had something either abnormal or lacking in its parts, such as legs too short or too long, tail shortened, etc.,¹ might be brought as a freewill offering. But doves and pigeons were shut out of the list, as they would be too small to be shared, and thus the idea of the meal in common would be lost.

DIFFERENT KINDS OF PEACE OFFERING.

Thus much for what is termed the 'material' for the sacrifice. But under the head of peace offerings we must include three different classes, according to the motives which prompted the offerer. Lev. vii. 11-21 thus defines them:

(1) Thanksgiving (*todah*). This, as being placed first, would be the most important peace offering. With the animal sacrifice, whatever it might be, was offered cakes made of fine flour sprinkled with oil, wafers of the same kind, and fried cakes, all unleavened; while, as forming part of the sacrificial meal, leavened bread was brought. Of the three kinds of unleavened bread, one specimen of each was offered as a 'heave' offering, and then eaten by the priest who sprinkled

¹ 'That hath anything superfluous or lacking in his parts,' Lev. xxii. 23.

the blood. The whole sacrifice must be eaten and finished the same day.

(2) Vow (*neder*), Lev. vii. 16. This was the payment in gratitude of a vow made on condition such and such things came to pass. The ritual in this case was the same as that for

(3) Freewill offering (*nedabah*), an offering brought spontaneously, without either condition or forethought. The sacrifices here brought might be eaten, not altogether necessarily on the same day, but on the next, and it was only on the third day that whatever remained must be burnt as utterly unfit for sacrifice or food, in fact, 'abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall bear his iniquity.' Herein lay, no doubt, sanitary reasons, as in those hot climates, except perhaps for a short time in winter, food would be uneatable on the third day.

The three kinds of peace offerings enumerated above were, of course, private and optional. Not so the peace offering for certain occasions. In the offering brought by the Nazirite at the close of his vow,¹ the peace offering, a ram without a blemish, was obligatory. Likewise, in the Feast of Weeks,² it was ordained that two lambs of the first year should be brought as a sacrifice of peace offerings. But even here, where the peace offering could not have the force of being out of a grateful heart without any prompting, it was of the greatest significance as accompanying the burnt and sin offering, wherein the sense of sin was swallowed up in adoration (burnt offering), and renewed and continued friendship (peace offering).

RITUAL OF THE PEACE OFFERING.

As belonging to that class of sacrifices which was not wholly consumed on the altar, the peace offering fell under the head of *sancta*, the *sanctissima* being the burnt, sin, and trespass offerings. The ritual for the service is given as follows :

¹ Numb. vi. 13, etc.

² Lev. xxiii. 19.

The animal having been selected 'without blemish,' was brought by the offerer into the Sanctuary, and there, his hand having been laid on its head, to mark his desire of dedicating his all to God, it was killed at the door of the Tabernacle, and the blood immediately sprinkled by the priest 'upon the altar round about,' just as in the ritual for the burnt-offering. Next, four distinct parts of the animal, the fat that covereth the entrails, *i.e.*, separates them from the stomach, the fat that forms part of the entrails, the kidneys and their fat, and the caul above the liver, were taken out, and burnt by the priests on the altar, upon a burnt offering which was already there, probably the daily sacrifice. This fat was God's share, undoubtedly as being what was in ancient times considered as the choicest portion of the animal, and as such what was frequently offered in sacrifice by such nations as the Persians, Egyptians, and Greeks. It is also curious to note, as showing that the whole world is kin, that it was by observing the entrails that the augurs of old claimed their knowledge of Divine things and what was to come to pass.

What was burnt on the altar was to be a 'sweet savour to the Lord.' Nay, further, it was the 'food of the offering made by fire unto the Lord,' *lechem Jehovah*, God's food. Not that Jehovah required food, as the Psalmist taught, but that in daily life He was to be acknowledged and felt to share. When the fat had been consumed, the breast and right shoulder were taken by the priest, and 'waved' before the Lord, up and down, and right and left, as later Judaism expressed it, to the four ends of the earth, after which consecrating process finished, these parts belonged to the priests, and might be eaten by themselves or their families in a holy place, *i.e.*, so long as it was not outside the camp in the wilderness, or Jerusalem in later times. Both the skin and the other parts of the animal belonged to the offerer, to be eaten as a joyful feast, with the feeling that he was eating that of which God Himself was a partaker, what had been accepted in the Sanctuary, and had ascended up as a 'sweet savour.' In this

sense the peace offering also is a perpetual sacrifice, for it is always a meet thing to give thanks unto the Lord, that God unto whom the vow must be performed, who heareth prayer, and who commanded: 'Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High. And call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.'¹

¹ Psa. l. 14, 15.

CHAPTER IV.

Sacrifices for Sins committed : Sin Offering ;
Trespass Offering.

THE sacrifices which have been spoken of already—the burnt, meat, and peace offerings—may be regarded as forming a class by themselves. Though in each one the idea of something out of harmony with the original plan of creation was perceptible, yet this sense of unworthiness—to call it by a stronger name, of guilt—was, after all, a subordinate one. They were, particularly, the *sacrifices as to the Covenant God*, gifts brought by a willing people to their Father in heaven, showing their adoration, their gratitude, their desire to be at peace with Him. But with the sin and the trespass offerings, we are brought face to face with quite another side of sacrifice. Here the offerer does not stand to God in the relation of child or friend, but he has, by some act committed, or something left undone, put himself out of the sunshine of God's favour, and is under a cloud. Not again, that he has committed some deadly sin ; for such there is nothing but death, 'the soul that sinneth, it shall die ;' or still worse, a fall under God's devouring wrath. It is, indeed, quite as much a mistake, on the one hand, to imagine that sin, under the Mosaic law, ended, as far as its consequences went, with the offering brought, as to think that, on the other hand, it was ever meant that wrong done should not be punished. Having, then, clearly understood this, that sins which had as their wages death received those wages most certainly, according to Mosaic law, it is fitting to inquire *what*

kind of offences could be expiated, and, so to speak, ended by the sin or the trespass offering.

SINS FOR WHICH OFFERING WAS MADE.

While, then, deadly sins, committed deliberately, or even hastily, merited and received God's 'cutting off,' it was quite possible that these very sins, or others more venial, might be committed unwittingly, or through self-deception. Or, even if committed deliberately, there might be such extenuating circumstances as would alleviate the just punishment even in the courts of law of modern times. Here again, the kinds of offence might differ. In addition to sins of commission, there are also sins of omission which often cause quite as much disturbance in the Divine polity as the former. More than this, some offences, whether against God or one's neighbour, upset positive rights, interfere with what is lawfully the share of another. Such sins are termed *trespasses*, and for them an *amende honorable* is required. But offences in general, when peculiarly hateful as causing a breach between God and man, and disturbing the mutual relationship between them, are those which we more generally designate as *sins*, the term being wider and more all-embracing. Then beyond 'sins,' individual acts of transgression, there lies the fact of SIN, in a state in which all are involved. Of this fallen state, emphatically, was 'remembrance' made.

This idea, that all was not well between God and man, is engrafted, it is true, on all sacrifices, even those which were distinctly 'gifts.' But in them it was always in the background; here, in the sin and in the trespass offering, it is the leading thought. But whereas in the trespass offering *satisfaction* was the end to be attained; in the sin offering it was, by *expiation* to annul and blot out the sin itself. This appears from the terms of the ritual itself. Here the blood is the chief part of the sacrifice—it is nothing without it; indeed, until the blood has been sprinkled, the sacrifice cannot be said to have been brought. Blood, then, is the principal

feature in the sin offering, and this was full of meaning. For, as the blood was to the Jew what constituted the *life* of the sacrifice: 'the blood is the life'—it was evident that the cause of the wrong done was absence of this vital principle—a weakness in the spiritual part of man's nature. And the sin offering brought had in it this idea: to supply what was wanting in the offerer: life as towards God.

The sin offering does not, however, only appear as brought for sins committed, but in many cases of ritual uncleanness, contracted either accidentally or by reason of the weakness of the flesh, the Israelite who had put himself outside the congregation had to offer a sin offering. The reason for this is not difficult to find. By some act, either of his own or of another, the man Levitically unclean had forfeited his place in the congregation. For him, then, approach to God as to a father or a friend was impossible; he must, in some way, buy back his old standing, and must put something material between himself and what was displeasing to God. Therefore, in the ritual prescribed for him who has been Levitically unclean, more than this, even for him who, as Nazirite, has been separated from the rest of the congregation, appears the sin offering, and that as the principal part of the service.

SIN OFFERING FOR THE SANCTUARY.

What, perhaps, teaches us more than anything the true position of the sin offering, as absolutely binding on every man, at any rate at some period, by reason of man's inherited alienation from God, is this: that when the Tabernacle, made according to the pattern shown in the mount, exactly as commanded, and, as we should imagine, as near its perfection as possible, had been reared up, everything in the building, the whole edifice itself, and all its vessels, were sprinkled with the blood of the sin offering. So true is it that bad is man's very best, as viewed by what is better than man. The mercy-seat itself, the holiest of all things, could not, any more than anything else, retain its sanctity, but always, once a year, on the

Day of Atonement,¹ had to be atoned for with blood. Herein lay the secret of the power of the sin offering: the blood sprinkled 'atoned,' not, indeed, for the material mercy-seat, nor for the Tabernacle, which was also 'atoned' for once a year, nor for the great altar of burnt offering itself, then sprinkled, but 'because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins,' what was in itself holy was polluted by the touch and by the presence of a sinful people. And so that polluted people were, *en masse* and as a nation, purified through their holy things, and were able to use the altar and the Tabernacle afresh, all wrong taken from it, for purposes of worship.

This periodical bringing of a sin offering for the whole congregation was, of course, politically, a great bond of union, and ethically, not of small importance as so many new epochs of departure in the right direction, while religiously, it was always a confession of guilt and plan for reconciliation. It is somewhat in this sense that, we take it, the sin offering appears in all the great feasts and the new moons, offered by the priests as representatives of the congregation, to expiate and atone for sins wittingly or unwittingly committed by themselves, or by the congregation since the last time of offering, that, as a reconciled people, they might be able to 'worship Jehovah in the beauty of holiness.'

Further, from the great choice of animals allowed, and from the liberty of using sacrifices of either sex, it is evident that Moses must have foreseen how often, and in how many cases, the sin offering would be needed, and that for this reason it was that he put so few restrictions on the material to be employed. But it must be borne in mind, that for those for whom the sin offering was appointed, it was enough to be told what they were to do; they required no reason why; only, they felt that, for such and such specified breaches of the Divine command, they were not as they wished to be, and they grasped at the remedy offered to them. This, we may

¹ Lev. xvi. 15.

judge, is the reason why so often in the Pentateuch the *rationale* of each prescribed rite is not given : because it was not wanted. We, who cannot rest content till we have learned all the secret springs and hidden meanings of all that crosses our path, cannot put ourselves on the same level as the Jews of old. But this does not detract in the least from the value of the faith or of the ritual.

RITUAL OF THE SIN OFFERING.

As regards the *material* for the sin offering, it was fixed, not by the wealth, but by the *personality* of the offerer, not by his means, nor yet by the magnitude of his sin. At the head of the list of animals which might be brought stood, as might be expected, the bullock, a young bullock. This, as sin offering, must be brought by such persons as :—

(1) The high priest, as representative of the congregation, and the high point of the nation. So to be offered once a year, on the Day of Atonement ;¹ and by the high priest for a sin of ignorance committed by the congregation, that is, some command disobeyed without the congregation's perceiving it at the time. When the sin had been found out² a sin offering of a young bullock might be brought by the high priest, and atone for the whole congregation.

(2) Or again, the high priest as an individual might have committed some sin, as any layman might do. For him also the young bullock was the fitting sin offering, since, as the holiest among a holy people, most was expected of him. The greater, then, was his guilt, and the larger the sin offering demanded of him. For from him would it be that the whole congregation would be led into error, so that as much as was required for the people in their totality was required of the high priest individually.

(3) Once more, at the consecration of the priests and

¹ Lev. xvi.

² As for example when the whole people ate food with the blood, I Sam. xiv. 32, etc.

Levites, and it would almost seem as if for the sin of any ordinary priest, a young bullock was brought as a sin offering.¹

As next in order of value, the *goat*, a he-goat, as it is termed in some places, a 'kid of the goats, a male without blemish,' was brought for

(a) A 'prince,' *i.e.*, the head of a tribe. The ritual in this case was somewhat simpler than in that for the high priest, Lev. iv. 23.

(b) At the consecration of the Tabernacle, Numb. vii. 16.

(c) On New Moons, Numb. xxviii. 15.

Descending a step lower as regards the personality of the offerer, we find a *she-goat*, kid of the goats, a female without blemish, ordered for any of the laity who might sin through ignorance, when he should discover his fault, Lev. iv. 28.

Again, a *ewe-lamb*, of the first year, without blemish, was what the Nazirite must bring as sin offering, as the price of re-admission into the congregation, Numb. vi. 14.

The leper who had been cleansed must also bring as sin offering the same ewe-lamb, Lev. xiv. 10.

With these four animals—the bullock, the he-goat, the she-goat, and the ewe-lamb—ends the list of most conspicuous wrong-doers, or people separated from the congregation, who needed atonement, or expiation, or a new place within the holy circle.

But there were still smaller degrees of unfitness which required a sin offering, and these had to bring turtle-doves or young pigeons. Such were the following:—

(a) The woman who had given birth to a child, male or female, when a certain period of time had elapsed, had to bring turtle-doves or young pigeons as a sin offering. It was felt that the beginning of man's life was attended with what was unclean and displeasing to God. To the Jew then, who looked upon all life as from its inception fallen from God, it was very fitting that the new life begun should be accompanied by a sin offering, to remove all that might be guilty, and induce the

¹ Comp. Exod. xxix. ; Lev. viii. and iv. 3, etc.

great King to look with a more favouring eye on both mother and child.

(*b*) A man Levitically unclean, by reason of some disease of the flesh, might, when the uncleanness had passed away, bring turtle-doves or young pigeons as a sin offering, Lev. xv. 14.

(*c*) A woman Levitically unclean, after the period of separation had passed, might bring the same sacrifice, Lev. xv. 19, etc.

(*d*) The Nazirite who had accidentally been defiled was to bring his sin offering, as penalty paid for his unwitting sin, Numb. vi. 10.

In cases of poverty, again, when a lamb was too costly a sacrifice, it was allowed, in the case of a man who was not able to bring a trespass offering, and in the case of the leper who was poverty-stricken, to bring turtle-doves, or young pigeons.¹

Lastly, where poverty did not admit even of such small birds, flour might be brought, and burnt on the altar before the Lord as a sin offering, neither anointed with oil nor with frankincense, since it was not a meat, but a sin offering.²

There were other cases also, in which a sin offering must be brought for accidental offences, or sins against one's neighbour. Such were :—

(*a*) The witness who had kept back what he had seen or heard, and had by so doing done injury, misleading the judge, or causing a turning aside of justice, Lev. v. 1.

(*b*) He who had touched the dead body of an unclean animal unwittingly, and only afterwards discovered his error, might bring a sin offering. This because he had vitiated his own purity, and needed to have it restored, Lev. v. 2.

(*c*) He who had touched anything unclean of man, in the same way and for the same reason required a sin offering, ver. 3.

(*d*) Lastly, a man who had carelessly, in course of conversation, sworn to do something, good or evil, pronouncing it with an oath, *i.e.*, lightly and without meaning it, made use of a

¹ Lev. v. 7 ; xiv. 22.

² Lev. v. 11, 12.

formula of swearing, and bound himself thereby, might, as an atonement, bring a sin offering, which, according to his ability, should be a lamb or a kid; but if, according to the curious Hebrew idiom, his hand did not reach so far, he might bring turtle-doves, or young pigeons, one for a sin, and another for a burnt offering.

THE SPRINKLED BLOOD.

Very wide-reaching indeed was the province of the sin offering. Stranger and Israelite alike could use it, for themselves individually, or collectively for a nation. The ritual itself supplies us with all the knowledge we need of the benefits attainable by the sin offering, and is peculiar enough to merit special attention.

Lev. iv. thus gives it:—

If the sacrifice for the sin offering be a young bullock, and the offerer be the priest who is anointed, *i.e.*, the high priest, the animal must be brought in the usual way to the door of the Tabernacle, there the hands of the offerer laid on its head, and the animal killed. The blood must then be taken into the Tabernacle, where the priest must dip his finger in it, and sprinkle it seven times, when the high priest was acting for the whole congregation, before Jehovah, near the veil, then on the horns of the altar of incense; and all the rest of the blood he must pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering. This blood-sprinkling was, in truth, the central point of the sacrifice. It meant, that man who by his sins had alienated his life from God, now desired to approach him again with that very life, which life his substitute, the animal's blood, represented. This life he leaves to God at the place from where God is wont to hold intercourse with man, and he can do so more hopefully, as his sin has not been wilful, and his will is more or less in harmony with the Divine Will. The number of times the blood is sprinkled, seven, is of course the symbolic number in Jewish worship, while the sprinkling on the horns of the altar of incense would seem to point to the man's desire to have his

atonement ever present before the mind of God. Lastly, as but a small quantity of the blood would be used for sprinkling, what remained over was poured out at the base of the great altar, because as it was of most special meaning, none of it could be wasted, or thrown aside, or lightly disposed of. This ends the first part of the ceremony.

THE CARRYING WITHOUT THE CAMP.

But death, and life offered in satisfaction for one's own life, could not expiate sin, or make what had been as though it had not been. More was required, even a guarantee that in the future the old would be put away, and the new man act newly. This was expressed by the second part of the ceremony, when the priest, separating all the fat from the flesh of the carcase, and burning it: not to serve as a meal, nor to express fellowship, but to expiate sin by destroying the best of the old, and showing clearly that nothing of what was most secret and dear would be kept back.

The remainder of the animal could not be used for any purpose. God would not accept it as food, the offerer therefore might not partake of it; and although, when the sin offering was brought for an individual Israelite, the priests were bidden to eat the flesh, yet this they did, not for enjoyment, but in fear, as, though holy themselves, they were taking into themselves what was covering sin, and it behoved them to be very careful lest they should run the same risks as those from which they were freeing their brethren. But for the offering of the high priest for the congregation, such eating was not allowed. The flesh, the skin, the inwards, all belonging to the bullock, must be carried forth without the camp, though into a clean place, the place where, in general, the ashes from the altar were poured out, and there be utterly burned with fire. Full of meaning was this act, as must necessarily be the case, since typically it foreshadowed the sacrifice of the Son of Man, outside the walls of Jerusalem, as the Great Sin Offering. To the Israelite of Moses' time it meant that the priests

could not feed upon the sacrifice, for they, too, needed to be reconciled by it, but yet that every part of the animal was so utterly holy, that by no chance whatsoever might it touch or be touched by anything profane. For what was then part of the holiest annihilation was the highest consecration, and nought could remain of the sin, since nought remained of the sinner's substitute.

SANCTITY OF THE OFFERING.

Indeed, so utterly holy was all connected with the sin offering, that the Mosaic law laid it down that, in those cases where the flesh of the sin offering might be eaten by the priests, the animal must be prepared for food and likewise eaten only in the holy place, *i.e.*, in the outer court of the Tabernacle. No layman might, of course, touch the blood; but if by any chance the officiating priest got some of the blood sprinkled upon one or any of his garments, that garment must be washed from its stains there and then, lest perchance some of the holy blood might be carried outside. If the meat were cooked in the holy place in an earthen vessel, the vessel must immediately afterwards be broken, probably because, especially if not glazed, the earthenware would absorb a portion of the holy material within it. A copper or brazen vessel, however, as not being so porous, need only be scoured, and rinsed in water. For the priests who might eat it, we are told that only the males might partake, the reason assigned being that it was 'most holy.'¹ It would almost seem as though burning the sin offering instead of eating it, when it was proper to do the latter, was a sin of deep significance,² and required very strong reasons to justify it. The principle here stood: that what God appointed as food, though most mysterious and awful, might not be lightly treated as common, or disposed of according to the fancy of the officiating priest. And it is in this sense that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, taking Christ as the Great Sin Offering to which all

¹ Lev. vi. 25-30.

² See Lev. x. 17, etc.

former sin offerings had pointed, though in this instance it was the 'once for all,' there being now no more offering for sin, wrote, 'Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?'¹

SIN OFFERINGS FOR THE CONGREGATION.

The sin offering brought by the whole congregation of Israel for some offence committed, differed in its ritual chiefly in this, that the elders, as representatives of the people, laid their hands on the bullock's head, and the priest, as middleman between God and the people, took the blood and sprinkled it, as a covering for the sin, an atonement for it, before the Lord. The fat was then burnt on the altar, and the flesh consumed without the camp in the ordinary way.

For the prince who brought a sin offering of a goat, or of a lamb, or the latter animal, brought either by him or by some other layman, the ritual was much simpler. The blood in such a case was only sprinkled on the horns of the altar of burnt offering (horns: as concentrating in themselves the whole force and power of the altar), and the fat consumed as for peace offerings, *i.e.*, on the same fire as the ordinary offerings.

THE TRESPASS OFFERING.

There is, in truth, in many respects, a very faint line of distinction between the sin and the trespass offering. They both belonged to the class of sacrifices brought for sins committed; both of them, as well as the burnt offering, were 'most holy' (*sanctissima*); both slain in the same place, on the north side of the altar of burnt offering;² and the part not consumed on the altar was, in either case, eaten by the priests alone within the Sanctuary.³ Both sacrifices also implied a desire on the part of the offerer to regain his old place within the community. But, when all this has been said,

¹ Heb. x. 29.

² Comp. Lev. i. 11.

³ Lev. vii. 6.

there remain many and striking points of difference. True though it was, that the trespass, or 'guilt' offering, as the Revisers have it (German : *Schuldopfer*), was an offering for sin against God, this was not its peculiar reason. The trespass offering was for some wrong actually done to some other person, either to one's neighbour, or to God's priests, or to God Himself ; and the sacrifice brought was not, as in the sin offering, an expiation and atonement, but in some sense part of the repentance for the wrong done, and satisfaction as regarded the wronged (*satisfactio, non expiatio*). So, whereas in the sin offering, after the atoning blood had been sprinkled, the rest of the blood, as a 'gift' to God, was poured out, in the much simpler ritual of the 'guilt offering' this element was utterly wanting, and the whole animal was needed for the completion of the 'satisfaction.' Yet the sacrifice was not payment of a debt, but an owning of guilt, the outcome of repentance, to be followed by restitution.

Again, the law of the trespass offering ordained that all men alike, no matter what might be their standing in the Theocracy, must bring as their sacrifice a male sheep, 'a ram without blemish out of the flocks,' and that of a certain fixed value, 'according to thy estimation (*i.e.*, the priest's) in silver by shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary;' that is, not too small nor too young to be of any market value, but, as tradition afterwards taught, so old and big that its value went by shekels in the plural, not in the singular. This shows a wide divergence from the sin offering, for which almost any clean animal might be brought, and leads us on to the next point of difference. The trespass offering was only to be used by individuals ; it nowhere applied to or could be offered by the whole congregation, nor by the high priest as its representative. It is, therefore, totally absent from all public occasions, whether feasts or fasts. And as its use was so limited, there was no reason why a wide choice of animals should be permitted. Moreover, it usually stood by itself, and was brought unaccompanied by any other bloody or

unbloody sacrifices, except in two instances, the reasons for which will be given in their proper place.

It should be, then, clearly kept in mind that the 'guilt offering' was a necessity, and an integral part of the repentance for those sins which, although involving wrong to some one outside the sinner, yet as being brought home to him by his own conscience, did not come within the scope of the secular arm, and were more especially unfaithfulness in the keeping of covenanted word and command, either to God or to man. The offender was, in the case of wrong done to a neighbour, to make restitution, where possible, to the person wronged, *in propriâ personâ*,¹ providing that if the injured man had no kinsman to whom, in default of himself, the money might be given, it was to go to the priest, as representative of God. The restitution fixed was, in addition to what had been fraudulently taken away, one fifth of its value, it being added that when this had been done, and the trespass ram offered 'he shall be forgiven; concerning whatsoever he doeth so as to be guilty thereby.'

This fifth part was, of course, the material expression of the repentance of the offender. But the Mosaic code does not enter into explanations of the *rationale* of the trespass offering, nor does it leave it to the individual to decide for himself whether he may bring the sacrifice or not. It merely furnishes us with a list of offences for which a trespass offering must be brought. The ritual, as described in Lev. vii., is not elaborate. The animal must be killed where the burnt offering is usually slain, the blood sprinkled round about the altar, the fat and part of the internals burnt on the altar as the guilt offering, and the remainder of the animal given to the officiating priest, as the one who had made atonement with it.

APPLICATIONS OF THE TRESPASS OFFERING.

The cases in which a guilt offering was to be brought are thus given:—

¹ Numb. v. 7.

(1) When a man has sinned 'unwittingly, in the holy things of the Lord,'¹ *i.e.*, has neglected to pay his dues, which though belonging to the priest, were really as to God, and by so doing has committed a trespass and been untrue to his word, he must make restitution in the thing wherein he has offended, add one fifth to its value, and bring his trespass offering, 'and he shall be forgiven.'

(2) If any man felt a weight of guilt on him, by reason of his having unwittingly done something which Jehovah had commanded should not be done, and yet could not bring the guilt home to himself in any definite respect, but only had a vague sense of uneasiness, he was certainly guilty, and needed a guilt offering; though, as the guilt was so undefined, nothing need be added to the ram itself.

(3) If a man dealt fraudulently with his neighbour: 'in the matter of deposit, or of bargain, or of robbery, or have oppressed his neighbour, or have found that which is lost, and deal falsely therein, and swear to a lie; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein,' he must make full restitution of all the wrong done, adding one fifth part thereto, and then bring his guilt offering which would finally clear him of all guilt.²

(4) He who seduced a slave girl, who, though betrothed to another man, was not yet free, and in some sense the property of another, did not suffer death, as he would have done had she been free, but was punished, together with the woman—tradition has it, with stripes; and moral order being thus vindicated, a trespass offering restored him to his original place.³

(5) The leper who had been cleansed from his leprosy must, in addition to a he-lamb for a sin offering, offer another one as a guilt offering;⁴ and this as the principal offering, since it was a common belief in ancient times that sickness was a punishment for sin committed (guilt); as also, so it has been imagined, because some atonement was needed for the length of time he had been obliged, by enforced absence from the congregation, to leave aside his duties both to God and his neighbour.

¹ Lev. v. 15, 16. ² Lev. vi. 2 to end. ³ Lev. xix. 20, 21. ⁴ Lev. xiv. 12.

(6) The Nazirite who had been accidentally defiled during the period of his separation,¹ must bring a he-lamb of the first year as a guilt offering, and after that begin his time over again. The reason of the defiled Nazirite requiring a guilt offering would seem to be that, unwittingly, he had been unfaithful to his vow, and by this means had done a wrong towards God. As part of his penitence, then, the trespass offering must be brought; but even now the days of his separation which had passed were 'void,' and he had to begin over again.

(7) Only once in later Bible history do we read of a 'guilt offering,' for an offence which had not been in so many words provided for in the Mosaic economy, and yet which came quite under the head of sins carrying guilt along with them. The occasion is told us in Ezra x. 18: some priests had married 'strange' women, in the time of general confusion. This was, of course, unfaithfulness to the Theocracy, though with extenuating circumstances. And so 'they gave their hands that they would put away their wives; and being guilty, they offered a ram of the flock for their guilt.'² Here satisfaction, the putting away of the foreign element, was accompanied by the trespass offering; and so the old place in the Theocracy was regained.

No community, however nearly perfect, exists without sin; but it is not too much to say, that the Mosaic law excelled all others of its time in perception of the justice of compensating those who had been injured, and the rightness of owning oneself in the wrong. This is the ethical side of the sin offerings; the spiritual aspect is deeper still. There is now, of course, no more offering for sin, but by the one great offering Christ has put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. No more do our holy things need to be cleansed with blood once a year, for the new covenant has been made, sins and iniquities are remembered no more, and 'where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.'³

¹ Numb. vi. 6-12.

² Ezra x. 19.

³ Heb. x. 16-18.

CHAPTER V.

Rites for Special Occasions: Circumcision; Redemption
of the Firstborn; Purifications.

I. CIRCUMCISION.

IT seems fitting that circumcision should first be considered in the number of services for special occasions, mainly for this reason: that it is so very distinctive of the Jewish religion and polity. However little ground there may be for the supposition, it is now at any rate one of the very strongest marks of being an Israelite. Thus much by way of introduction.

The practice of circumcision, as we have it in the Bible, dates from pre-Mosaic times; and by the way the rite is referred to in Lev. xii. is evidently considered too generally known and firmly established to need anything more than a casual mention. It was first Divinely commanded to Abraham, and in his case was associated alike with the establishment of the covenant, of which it was the outward and visible sign, and the giving of the new name to him who had been hitherto known as Abram.¹ To Abraham it was commanded as a perpetual obligation, and he accordingly had his son circumcised when eight days old; and the rule was followed even during the sojourn and bondage in Egypt. During the wanderings in the Sinai Peninsula it was laid aside; but one of the first acts done by Joshua in the Promised Land was a grand circumcising of all males in Gilgal, after which the Passover, which in consequence of the neglect of this ceremony had not been kept during the wanderings, was celebrated, and by this 'the reproach of Egypt' was 'rolled away' from off them.²

¹ Gen. xvii.

² Josh. v. 2-11.

The later history of circumcision is briefly told. It was practised by all Jews, even during the Captivity, down to the time of the Maccabees, when Antiochus Epiphanes, the oppressor of the nation, forbade it,¹ and brought down by these means wrath and ruin on his own head. Though in Herodian times renegade Jews might try to appear as if uncircumcised, yet these men were exceptions; and down to the present day every true Jew holds to the ancient command.

Thus much for the Biblical and post-Biblical history of circumcision. As regards its position to the world in general, it must be borne in mind that the rite is in no way peculiar to the Jew. The Arabs are circumcised to the present day; and as it is incorporated into the Koran, we are not surprised to find that it was the custom among Persians, Turks, and even Indians, while the Abyssinians, with their decidedly Jewish practices, also possess this custom. It has likewise been traced among the Phœnicians, Mexicans, and South American Indians. Sanitary reasons, doubtless, lay at the root of this world-wide custom; how far rightly is still an open question. But there can be little doubt that the Jews got the rite originally from Egypt, the country, indeed, from which it spread to all the other Oriental nations who practised it; and it may be in this fact we find the reason why the Assyrians and Babylonians, the great rivals of Egypt, did not practise the rite. Abraham himself sojourned in Egypt; Hagar, his son Ishmael's mother, was an Egyptian. What more likely than that he should have been Divinely directed to make use of a rite with which he was already acquainted, and that from what he understood by having seen, he should be led on higher, to look upon circumcision as the sign in himself of his covenant with the Almighty?

It is curious in this connection to note that, although Egypt was undoubtedly the home of circumcision, and that in very ancient times it must have been practised by all Egyptians, in later times it was confined to the priest-class, and with them

¹ 1 Macc. i. 51.

stood for a sign of perfect purity, and as a mark of those who could penetrate into the hidden mysteries. As transferred from the priests of Egypt to the kingdom of priests, Israel, this is a feature well worthy of note.

Here ends all wherein the circumcision of the Jews, the nation spoken of as '*the* circumcision,' resembles that of other nations. In Egypt, and among the Arabs, it was performed between the ages of six and fourteen, generally about thirteen, to mark when the boy had developed into the man. The Jew was circumcised on the eighth day of his life, when, with a week passed, he might fairly have been said to begin to live an existence of his own. So what was in other nations the boundary line between youth and manhood was to the Jew an act of obedience, an entering into the covenant of the new life begun, an act of consecration of a soul still unspotted from the world.

No animal might be offered to the Lord before it had lived seven days, on the eighth it could be brought;¹ so was circumcision likewise an act of sacrifice. What it meant may be still more seen from the negative side. Not only did the term 'uncircumcised' convey endless contempt as used by the Jew in reference to other nations, but the phrases, 'uncircumcised heart,' 'ear,' 'lips,' scattered up and down the Bible, stand for these various members unconsecrated to God, in a state inimical to Him, the result not only of the natural alienation of man, but of downright rebellion and dereliction of a given command.

Israel then, as a nation, must have all its males circumcised on the eighth day of life; even the Sabbath, with its command of rest from every labour, gave way to this paramount obligation. Males only were circumcised; there was no distinctive rite for females, they being probably looked upon as part of the property of the man, his wife, mother, or daughter, and scarcely as possessing separate individuality. With the rite of circumcision (Heb., *mulah*) was generally associated the giving of the child's name, a practice probably taken from the change

¹ Exod. xxii. 30.

made in Abraham's name. If the child were sick, or if two children of one mother had both died from the effects of the operation, so the later Jews taught, the ceremony might be put off till the twelfth day, or even later. The act was, in ancient times, performed by the father, the instrument used being in old times a stone or flint knife, in later times a steel one. The penalty for any Jew who was not circumcised was, as having forsworn his share in the Covenant, cutting off.¹

A NATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS RITE.

In very truth, it was a purely national, though even in this a religious rite. Any stranger who desired to join the commonwealth of Israel, and enjoy its privileges, and partake of its Passover, must be circumcised, he and all his house. These strangers who had voluntarily joined the Jewish faith and undergone the rite, were afterwards known as Proselytes of Righteousness, in contradistinction to other, half-hearted, outsiders, who not undertaking all the restrictions of the nation, did not share in all its privileges, and were known by the name of Proselytes of the Gate. But it was of course not binding on any stranger; could only be performed at his own voluntary request; nor would it seem to have been required of children of Jewish mothers by heathen fathers.²

2. REDEMPTION OF THE FIRSTBORN.

Though not properly coming into the Mosaic ritual, it seems fitting to give in this connection the laws of Redemption, especially as this is another of the distinctive acts of the Jewish people. According to the Pentateuch, every firstborn male creature, whether man or beast, was holy, and belonged of right to Jehovah. This was of course perfectly consistent with the whole tone of mind of the nation, who must judge that not only themselves, but their lands and goods, were in very truth a gift from God, and that the deliverance from Egypt was a debt they never could repay. It is, in very deed, on this that the idea of

¹ Gen. xvii. 14.

² Comp. the case of Timothy, Acts xvi. 1-3.

consecrating the firstborn is based ; not, as has been so often supposed, because the firstborn of Egypt were slain and those of Israel saved, nor from the idea of supporting the priest tribe, but because the first was looked upon, not only as the most valuable, but as the representative of and substitute for all that might follow, just as the tenths were looked upon as summing up and completing the whole. In the person of his firstborn, then, whether of man or of beast, the pious Israelite offered up his all, and acknowledged the Divine right and rule over himself. True, this idea of consecrating the best as substitute for the whole is not confined to the Jewish nation, but is fairly world-wide. But in no other nation of that period, it may safely be asserted, was it carried into every department of life, nor so universally acted upon.

Since the firstborn already belonged by right to God, it naturally followed that it was no more at the disposal of its natural master. Hence the law, that no firstborn among beasts, by its being firstborn already consecrated, could be sanctified by man to the Lord, *i.e.*, offered in sacrifice, or vowed.¹ There seems, however, to be some doubt as to what constituted the firstborn, at any rate among men. Exod. xiii. lays it down that 'whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel,' *i.e.*, the firstborn of the mother, was to be consecrated, while Deut. xxi. 15-17 seems to convey that the firstborn, as regarded privileges as well as responsibilities, was the eldest son of his father, by his first wife, and as such must not be excluded from his rights. The firstborn must, of course, be male ; if the eldest were a female, the law did not apply.

Among firstborns, the firstborn of man took the highest place. As representative of his family, as in patriarchal times the officiating priest, he was of value ; but as he could not be offered in sacrifice, or 'given' as the Levites were to the Lord, he must be redeemed ; and accordingly a price was set on his head, to be paid throughout all ages. This price was five 'shekels of the Sanctuary' (or 'standard shekels'),

¹ Lev. xxvii. 26.

which must be paid to the priests when the child was over a month old. The money formed part of the priests' revenues, and was usually paid in the Sanctuary when the mother was purified after childbirth, the infant itself being present.¹

THE FIRSTBORN OF ANIMALS.

Next in order came the firstborn of beasts meet for sacrifice. These, when the due time had elapsed, must be brought in sacrifice, their blood sprinkled on the altar, their fat burnt as an offering by fire, like a thank offering, and the flesh (explained to mean the wave breast and the right thigh) belonged to the priests.² This if the animal were Levitically faultless, when, according to a later provision,³ it was to be eaten within sacred bounds not only by the priests, but by the offerer and his family also, as a holy feast. But if the firstborn animal had any blemish which rendered it unfit for sacrifice, it must be eaten by the owner and his family at home, since, as it was the firstborn, it was too holy to be put to any ordinary use, and yet was not good enough to be brought to the Sanctuary.⁴

The firstborn of unclean domestic animals, of which the ass was the representative, must be redeemed with a lamb, or if the owner did not set even that value on it, a lamb being of much less value than an ass, the neck of the ass must be broken, or else it, or the 'unclean cattle,' might be redeemed at its full value, with a fifth part added thereto.⁵

THE FIRSTFRUITS.

Akin to all this is the law of the Firstfruits, which has been treated in another connection. But from what has here been said it is quite evident that the giving of the firstborn to the Lord had only a secondary meaning as regarded the priesthood. Of course those who ministered to the altar ought to live of the altar, but their share in the holy things was not the best, it was

¹ Comp. Luke ii.

² Numb. xviii. 17, 18.

³ Deut. xv. 20.

⁴ Deut. xv. 21, 22.

⁵ Lev. xxvii. 27.

merely what was left over and above. And the ancient Jewish mode of acknowledgment of indebtedness to God, and consecration of their all to Him, is, to say the least, a sublimer conception than that arrived at by any other nation of those days.

3. PURIFICATIONS.

As was only to be expected, by the law was the knowledge of sin, and many things which in patriarchal times would be classed as accidental or excusable were ritually things unclean, which rendered the person affected unfit to join in the services of the Sanctuary, and put him outside the community. Leaving aside the restrictions laid on food, especially animal, which have been treated as belonging to the political and ethical life of Israel, there were many circumstances even of everyday life which did not seem to harmonise with the standard of holiness set up before the people. Men and women, then, falling into such circumstances, were unholy, and needed reconciliation, as disturbing the general good; but of course there were degrees of uncleanness, and a corresponding scale of obligatory service. Of course later Judaism, with its endless quibbling, was here in its element, and the degrees and refinements of offences were infinite and infinitesimal. In ancient Judaism, however, the lines were clearly and broadly marked, and it is to this aspect we must now give our attention.

Roughly speaking, there were three classes of defilement; (1) that contracted by death, (2) that contracted by bodily diseases, under which head we must place the plague of leprosy, (3) and that contracted by childbirth. All of these unclean persons needed special rites, but the services differed according to the amount of uncleanness supposed to have been contracted.

(1) *Defilement by death.* The presence of death, which was the outcome of sin, carried sore defilement along with it. Everyone around the corpse of a man, everyone who came into the tent where he had died, every uncovered vessel in it, was unclean; nay, if one walking in an open field came across a corpse, whether dead by fair means or by foul, or who touched

a human bone or a grave, was unclean. It was not, however, *death* which made unclean, but the dead. He was a blot on God's earth, a deformity. So his presence polluted those who touched him for seven days. The service for purification of such a defiled man is given as follows in Numbers xix. :—

RITUAL OF THE RED HEIFER.

At some period in Israel's history, and from time to time, a special service took place. A red heifer, perfect in every way, which had never been used for service, was taken by the priest outside the camp, and there slain in his presence by some other individual. Then the priest dipped his finger in the warm blood, and sprinkled it in the air seven times towards the Sanctuary; then another man burnt the whole heifer, skin and all, before the priest, who cast into the burning mass cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet thread: cedar, as typical of eternity of life; hyssop, of purification from the power of death; and scarlet thread, to show the intensity of life in the red heifer. Then both priest and his assistant in this service were unclean, and must wash their bodies and clothes in water, and be unclean until the evening. Meanwhile another clean man gathered up all the ashes, and stored them outside the camp in a clean place, till they might be required by the children of Israel, and having, by touching this most awful sin offering, rendered himself unclean, he must wash his clothes, and be unclean until the evening.

And when a man had been defiled by touching a corpse, one of his neighbours, who was clean, must take some of these ashes, and pouring on them in a vessel some 'living' water, must sprinkle from it, with hyssop, the tent, its vessels, and the defiled person, both then, and on the third, and on the seventh day; and on the seventh day the unclean man might purify himself, and wash his clothes, and at even—sunset—he would be clean. But if any profane soul neglected to purify himself, he would be 'cut off from the midst of the assembly;' there was no longer any place for him in the holy nation.

He likewise, who touched the carcase of any unclean animal or insect, made himself unclean, though in a much smaller degree. Such an one must wash his clothes, and be unclean till even, but his defilement did not extend beyond the one day.¹

OFFERINGS FOR OTHER FORMS OF DEFILEMENT.

(2) *Defilement contracted by bodily diseases.* Here must first be placed leprosy, which, as typical of sin, was regarded as not only particularly hateful, but as punishment for sin committed. But were he made clean from this disease, on the day when he was so declared, he must be brought to the priest for examination, yet 'without the camp,' since his healing was not yet an absolute certainty. When the priest had ascertained this, he was to take two living clean birds (what kind we are not told, but the Vulgate has it 'sparrow'), together with cedar wood, scarlet thread or stuff, and hyssop, since to all practical effect the leper was as good as dead, and needed the same symbols of life for his cleansing as he who had been polluted by contact with death. Of the birds, one was killed over 'living' water in an earthen vessel, and then the remaining bird, the hyssop, the scarlet, and the cedar wood, were all dipped in the bloody water, and with the water the leper was sprinkled seven times, and the living bird, all sprinkled with the life of the other bird, was allowed to go free, a picture of the cleansed man, now, as it has been well pointed out, unrestrained and unfettered as to his acts or dwelling-place; or, as it is also said, when its work was finished it could go free, bearing the disease away from earth to the purifying air. Meanwhile, the leper washed his clothes, shaved off all his hair, among which it was thought the infection might hide itself, bathed himself in water, and was admitted into the camp, although not into his own house. This ended the first part of the ritual. When a week was completed, on the seventh day he must again shave all his

¹ Lev. xi. 24.

hair, and wash his flesh and clothes, and on the next day be again consecrated and reconciled to God, by bringing two spotless he-lambs, one spotless ewe-lamb of the first year, three tenths of an ephah of flour for a meal offering, mixed with oil, and a log of oil. One of the he-lambs was for a 'guilt offering,' and both it and the oil were waved before the Lord, and with the blood of the guilt offering the priest touched the tip of the right ear, the thumb of the right hand, and the great toe of the right foot of the leper, consecrating him once again to God's service. The same was done with the oil, after it had been sprinkled seven times before the Lord, as an atonement. The service ended with offering the sin offering, which was followed by the burnt offering and the meat offering.

But if the leper were a poor man, he might substitute for the lamb of the sin offering and that of the burnt offering, two turtle doves, or young pigeons, 'such as he was able to get ;' but the guilt offering was not decreased, although the meat offering also might be reduced from three-tenths of an ephah to one-tenth.

The other kinds of bodily disease which needed purification are given in Lev. xv., as lesser degrees of defilement, and in most cases natural, and such as in these days would be looked upon rather as objects of pity, as owing to weakness of some bodily organ. The law provides for these defilements, in cases when the defilement contracted, being natural, was of lower degree, for either man or woman the same purification : bathing, or washing, and being reckoned unclean till the even. In cases where defilement was greater, since the impurity, by long continuance, partook of the nature of actual malady, and might have been caused by some sin committed, not, as in other cases, merely the inherited taint of sin, the law prescribed not only ablutions on the first and seventh days for cleansing, but the sacrifice of two turtle doves or young pigeons on the eighth day, one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, that thus he or she might be re-admitted into the congregation.

(3) *Childbearing*, among other nations also of antiquity, was thought to render the mother, among the ancient Indians also the father and the relatives, unclean. The sorrow of childbearing being part of the curse pronounced on woman in the Garden of Eden, it was only natural that in the Jewish code the mother should be looked upon as expiating inherited guilt. For the first seven days after the birth of a son, she was unclean to a high degree; on the eighth day the child was to be circumcised, but even after that the mother might not touch anything holy, or come into the Sanctuary, until thirty-three days had elapsed, when she was looked upon as restored to her usual health and habits of life, and offered, if rich, a lamb for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtle dove for a sin offering; or, if she were poor, she might substitute a turtle dove for the lamb. If, however, she had borne a female child, her period of greater uncleanness extended over two weeks, and that of the lesser over sixty-six days, probably from the ancient idea that the birth of a female not only carried more defilement with it, but physically that as it was accompanied with harder labour and more weakness on the part of the mother, she would require a longer time to recruit her strength.

Under the head of purifications should more properly be placed the trial by the *water of jealousy* for the wife suspected of adultery, the only ordeal prescribed in the Mosaic ritual, and curious enough to warrant more space than can be given here.

One more service remains to be noted: the cleansing of a city or land from the *guilt of murder* by some unknown hand. If a dead man were found lying in a field, and there was not the slightest clue as to his murderer, the elders of the city were to sacrifice, in a valley with running water, a heifer which had never been used, by breaking its neck, after which the representatives of the city which lay nearest to the murdered man were to wash their hands over the killed heifer, saying, 'Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it.

Forgive, O Lord, Thy people Israel, whom Thou hast redeemed, and suffer not innocent blood to remain in the midst of Thy people Israel.' And, adds the text, the blood shall be forgiven them, 'when thou shalt do that which is right in the eyes of the Lord.'¹

SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE PURIFICATIONS.

And although to the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews the 'divers washings' of the Mosaic ritual were 'carnal ordinances, imposed until a time of reformation,' yet they were full of meaning to the devout Israelite. Holiness to him could not exist apart from purity, and all the weaknesses of his flesh only served to rouse in him a feeling of unworthiness for God's service. The prophet Isaiah, even in the palace of the Almighty, was forced to cry, 'Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;' and the prayer of David, spoken in language that told of ceremonial purification, showed that the ceremony was not only understood by the head, but the meaning impressed on the heart of the true Jew:

'Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.'

¹ Deut. xxi. 1-9.

CHAPTER VI.

The Liturgical Ritual:

Benediction, Prayer, and Praise.

THE Jew of Moses' time was pre-eminently a man of *deeds*. Still, in his child-period, he required the outward and visible, fire, smoke, and tempest, to keep him in mind of the ever-present Deity. Yet even he often felt that to move always in a prescribed line, offer the same atonement for the faults into which he was always falling, show his adoration in the same way that all his fellow-countrymen did, was crushing to his individuality, and that he needed something in which he himself was both priest and suppliant. Such a means he would find in prayer.

At first sight it may seem strange that 'to pray' is nowhere made a distinct command. The Bible over and over again declares how excellent a thing is prayer, but nowhere, at any rate in the Mosaic law, is it laid down as an obligation. But in truth its very efficacy is bound up with its being exempt from all rules and regulations. A man may pray when, and how, and as long as he likes, without trenching on any one of God's commands. The Jews, indeed, divided prayer into four classes: (1) the asking for distinct good things or favours, (called *techinnah*); (2) praise (*tehillah*), which included benediction; (3) entreaty or supplication (*haphgaah*); and (4) thanksgiving (*todah*). These forms of prayer are all represented in the service of the Synagogue, but they would have been ante-dated, so to speak, in that of Moses. It is said that David first introduced prayer, as he undoubtedly did music, both vocal and instrumental, into the services of the Sanctuary.

But with the heading of Psalm xc. 'A prayer of Moses the man of God,' with the altars of the patriarchs, so often erected to 'call upon the name of the Lord,' and with the benediction of the Levites before us, we can scarcely doubt that the Sanctuary of the Mosaic time and afterwards—witness the presence of Hannah praying therein at Shiloh—was a place for public as well as for private prayer.

Further, the Mosaic ritual prescribes not only confession on the Day of Atonement, undoubtedly a form of prayer,¹ but actually gives a form of address to God to be used when the firstfruits were presented,² and another when the third year's tithes had been given as ordered.³ These prayers are, however, mainly invocation, and the liturgy certainly belongs to a later period of Israel's history. But one relic of most ancient liturgy still survives to our day—the blessing spoken by Aaron and his sons over the people, putting on them the 'name' of the God of Israel, and calling down His blessing: Numbers vi. 22-27.

'Jehovah bless thee, and keep thee:

Jehovah make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:

Jehovah lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.'

The offerings of praise, in their exuberance and joyousness, belong to a later day; and the Temple service was largely choral and instrumental. 'The singers as well as the players on instruments were there.' The last of the Psalms well represents the crowning delights of the Sanctuary.

'Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet,
Praise Him with the psaltery and harp;
Praise Him with the timbrel and dance,
Praise Him with stringed instruments and the pipe
Praise Him upon the loud cymbals,
Praise Him upon the high-sounding cymbals.'

¹ Lev. xvi. 21.

² Deut. xxvi. 1-11.

³ Vers. 12-15.

The absence of all this from the Mosaic institutes is remarkable. And here, may it not be urged, is one incidental proof of their antiquity. Had they been the invention of a later day, when the 'service of song' had long been a chief feature of worship 'in the House of Jehovah,' is it conceivable that there should have been no reference to this characteristic of Israelite devotion? It seems impossible; and here we have one of many indications that the Law was verily given as it professes to have been, in the days of the desert wandering, in a form adapted to the condition of the people in days long before the stately form and ceremonial of Temple worship had given meet expression to 'the praises of Israel.'

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PART III.

Holy Seasons.

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 Holy Seasons.

CHAPTER I.

The Day, Week, and Month.

THE DAILY SERVICE.

As Israel was 'holiness to Jehovah,' so every day in the nation's life was hallowed by service and sacrifice. The daily rite, according to the original ordinance, was to consist in sacrificing two lambs of the first year: one in the morning between sunrise and noon, or about nine a.m.; the other in the evening, or, rather, 'between the two evenings,' or between afternoon (3 p.m.) and sunset, as a burnt offering, together with a meat offering of one tenth of an ephah of fine flour,¹ mixed with one fourth of a hin of beaten oil, with one fourth of a hin of wine as a drink offering.² This morning and evening sacrifice was to be 'perpetual' (*tamid*) to all generations, never omitted or superseded by any other solemnity; even on feast days it was observed, although it was then made an hour earlier than usual, so as not to interfere with the special services of the day.

Incense was also offered daily on the Golden Altar in the Holy Place,³ which service took place at the time the Golden Candlestick was trimmed and its lamps refilled. At the same

¹ The ephah was about $4\frac{1}{2}$ gallons; the hin one sixth of the ephah. The quantities therefore were, of flour rather more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ pints, of wine $1\frac{1}{2}$ pint.

² See Exod. xxix. 38-42. ³ Exod. xxx. 7, 8.

service took place the daily peace offering,¹ and the whole concluded with the priestly benediction.

The symbolism of this daily repeated service is not difficult to trace. The daily burnt offering acknowledged that all life belonged to God, and symbolically rendered back to Him His own. The meal offering in like manner indicated that all the fruits of men's industry and toil were the gift of God; the incense was an expression of thankfulness and praise, while the peace offering showed the worshippers in near and confidential relationship with Him.

From the time of David onwards, portions of the Psalms were daily chanted in the morning and evening services, accompanied by instrumental music; and doubtless the liturgy grew gradually more ornate. After the daily service had been performed, private sacrifices were brought; that is, during the hours between the two daily services.

THE SABBATH.

The division of time into periods of seven days, connected as this is with the Sabbath, appears to have been known in patriarchal times.² Again the wording of the fourth commandment, 'Remember,' would seem to point to the observance of the Sabbath in earlier times; but, on the other hand, Deut. v. 15 distinctly bases it on the deliverance from Egypt: 'and thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day.'

Be this as it may, from the time of Moses onwards, there was no deviation from the rule of observing the seventh day as a Holy day, a 'rest,' or 'Sabbath' day, one on which all work must be laid aside, as 'profaning' the hours which were to be devoted entirely to the service of the Creator, who had Himself hallowed the day by resting on it from the work of creation.

¹ Lev. vi. 12, etc.

² See Gen. xxix. 27, 28. It has also been argued from the phrase 'at the end of days,' Gen. iv. 3, that there was at least a stated time for worship, naturally the Sabbath. But this is doubtful.

This Divinely consecrated day was the pivot, so to speak, on which the Jewish sacred calendar turned. From its place in the days of the week, the seventh, everything connected with the number seven had a special value ; the seventh month, the seventh year, the seven times seventh year ; so that while to the Jew ten was the number of perfection, seven was the covenant number.

The Jew, then, all the year round, would live from Sabbath to Sabbath ; and from the day of rest he would return refreshed to his daily toil. It is conceded that very possibly, as some contend, the division of time into periods of seven days was connected with the duration of time in each phase of the moon. Still the Jewish view of the Sabbath as a rest-day is quite peculiar to the chosen people, and, as may easily be seen, though originally corresponding with the different quarters of the moon, it could not continue to fit in exactly with them ; and even Egypt cannot claim to have taught Israel this.

According to the first intention, the Sabbath was to be a day of holy joy ; and the ceremonialism and formality of its observance by the Jews in the days of our Lord were utterly repugnant to its design. As was fitting, the services of the Sanctuary were more elaborate on the Sabbath than on ordinary days. In addition to the ordinary daily sacrifices, two more he-lambs of the first year were offered, and two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, with the customary drink offering attached to this sacrifice.¹

Further, the Sabbath was the day on which the Shewbread was to be changed ;² and dire was the vengeance which overtook the profane man who broke the Sabbath rest by putting his hand to any work.³ For in truth the Sabbath, like circumcision, was a mark of God's covenant with Israel, as also of God's covenant with the earth after creation. It was also a symbol and type of that rest which remaineth for the people of God, the spiritual rest of the New Covenant, for the consummation of which all creation yearns, when all the struggle

¹ Numb. xxviii. 9, 10. ² Lev. xxiv. 8. ³ Comp. Exod. xxxi. 15.

for existence which now endures will be past, and the plan of God will be wrought to its glorious completion.

THE MONTH.

It was fitting also that Israel should hail and consecrate to God each greater division of time ; and as these were marked among the Israelites, as in all early nations, chiefly by the moon, that each new moon should be a solemn time.

Accordingly, we find it laid down¹ that 'in the beginnings of your months,' *i.e.*, each new moon, in addition to the ordinary daily sacrifices, another burnt offering should be brought, consisting of two young bullocks, one ram, seven he-lambs of the first year without blemish ; three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat offering for each bullock ; two-tenths as a meat offering for the ram ; and one-tenth for a meat offering for each lamb, with the corresponding drink offering. In addition to these tokens of adoration and self-consecration to God, a he-goat was to be brought as a sin offering, probably for sins unwittingly committed by the congregation during the month that had passed. Further, the priests were to blow with their trumpets.² But of more consequence than any of the other new moons, since it was their 'Sabbath,' was the new moon of the seventh month. It was a day of 'solemn rest' to the children of Israel, 'a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.' As on a Sabbath day, no servile work was to be done ; and an 'offering made by fire' was to be offered unto the Lord.³ In nature also, the seventh month, the month of harvest, would be an epoch of joyfulness, and to the pious Israelite the religious month must correspond. Here came his great Feast, that of Tabernacles ; and from beginning to end it was a true Sabbath of months. Going still farther, the seventh year was, agriculturally, a year of rest, a 'Sabbath' to the land ; politically, the termination of servitude ; socially, a laying aside of what had been acquired, not inherited. Still more marked was this by the fiftieth year (after 7×7), the

¹ Numb. xxviii. 11-15. ² Numb. x. 10. ³ Lev. xxiii. 24, 25.

Year of Jubilee, heralded in by trumpets. So from one end of his life to the other, the Jew but completed cycles of religious living, and stood out as representative of the Divine, by bringing the Divine into his everyday life.

We annex the names of the months, with their English equivalents. In order that the year should always begin in spring, a thirteenth month was intercalated when necessary; and it must be admitted that even viewed in the light of our present knowledge of the science of computing time, the Jews were very far advanced in their chronology.

MONTHS.

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|-----|--|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. | Nisan | . (old name Abib) | . March–April. |
| 2. | Ijar | . („ „ Ziv) | . April–May. |
| 3. | Sivan | | . May–June. |
| 4. | Tammuz | | . June–July. |
| 5. | Ab | | . July–August. |
| 6. | Elul | | . August–September. |
| 7. | Tishri | . („ „ Ethanim) | . September–October. |
| 8. | Marcheshvan | („ „ Bul) | . October–November. |
| 9. | Kislev | | . November–December. |
| 10. | Tebeth | | . December–January. |
| 11. | Shebat | | . January–February. |
| 12. | Adar | | . February–March. |
| 13. | Veadar (‘and Adar’), intercalary, where needful. | | |

The derivation of many of the names of these months is very doubtful. The political year would seem to have begun with the seventh month. The above is the ecclesiastical year, as given by Bishop Haneberg: *Religiöse Alterthümer der Bibel*.

CHAPTER II.

Annual Feasts and Fasts.

FROM what has just been said, it is evident that the Jews were constantly put in mind, all through their life, of their position as regarded God, and of the duty and service which they owed Him. But it was plain that, when they should have taken possession of the land promised to them, even the rites ordained in the Pentateuch would have but little bearing on the vast majority of the people, no longer assembled in one camp, but settled at a distance from the central Sanctuary, and unable to join in its daily and weekly sacrifices. For the people who lived in the metropolis it would be easy enough; but how was the vast body of the nation to be held together in one common ritual, when the outward means were wanting? And if they fell from one another in religion, how could they hope to face the outside and hostile world politically?

It must be borne in mind that the Jews were intended to be pre-eminently an agricultural nation, and the tilling of the soil has naturally a very isolating effect on a body of men. The lawgiver, by Divine direction, provided against these dangers; first, by appointing a central Sanctuary; second, by ordaining festive seasons; and third, by commanding the presence of all male Israelites in one place at these particular festive times.

Here it must be borne in mind that the Pentateuch law was by no means arbitrary or unreasonable: it did not command what it was beyond the power of every Israelite to perform. Thus the festive seasons were all during those months of the

year when the head of the household, the representative Israelite, could most conveniently undertake the journey: in spring, and at the beginning and at the end of harvest; but none in those winter months when ploughing and tilling were necessary, and when a journey was fraught with perils from winds and tempests. As an agricultural nation, also, the children of Israel would feel it specially fitting that each great event of the agricultural year should be marked in the sacred calendar, and the times of reaping from the fruits of the land remind them of rendering what was due to their King and Great Landlord. And so the command,¹ 'Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord God,' instead of being a 'grievous' command, was one of the ordinances which, more than almost anything else, served to keep the nation united, and thus able to face foes much more powerful than themselves.

Besides being *agricultural anniversaries*, the feasts became severally *historical commemorations*, while each in its turn afforded a *type* of better things to come. This threefold significance of the festivals is the key to their extraordinary interest and importance.

The three principal feasts, all marking distinct agricultural epochs, are termed *chaggim*, feasts of joy, from the Hebrew verb *chagag*, to dance in circle. They were both family and national gatherings, times of sacred and secular rejoicing, holidays in the modern as well as in the ancient signification. In general they were distinct from Sabbaths, which, as has already been pointed out, were the starting-point of the whole Jewish sacred calendar. But here again the sacred number seven comes into prominence, since, as has been shown by many writers, there were seven Sabbath days among the feasts, that is, seven days which were to be observed like an ordinary Sabbath, with rest from all labour, a holy convocation, and worship in common of the Deity. So the sacred year had its week of holy days, which were not a burden, but a delight. These

¹ Exod. xxiii. 17.

days, which will be spoken of more particularly in their own place were:—(1, 2) The first and seventh days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (*Mazzoth*); (3) The Feast of Weeks; (4) The New Moon of the seventh month; (5) The Day of Atonement; (6) The first day of the Feast of Tabernacles; and (7) The eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles. The other days during the festival periods were days of joy and gladness only.

For in the Sabbath rest, which completed each period of toil, whether weekly, or in the festive year, the Jew had to remember, not only the rest to come for which he hoped, but the curse which was the blight of the whole human race. The labour of tilling the thankless soil was part of this curse; but it was lightened by the Sabbath rest, wherein man, like his Creator, rested from all his work. This feature could not be left out in the greater festivals—times when man is readier to learn and receive from the very gladness of his heart. Nor are these things unworthy our consideration, even in these distant days.

It is undoubtedly true that festal seasons are not peculiar to the Jewish ritual, but may be found in almost every religious system of every age and country. Further, the Jew had this in common with the rest of the human race, that the great seasons of sowing, reaping, ingathering, etc., of the fruits of the earth were the fitting times for these feasts. It may also be that these very feasts were pre-Mosaic, and simply grafted into his code of observances. But it must be admitted that they were most purely and exclusively *national*; and that they borrowed little, perhaps nothing, from outsiders, except the seasons, which, after all, would naturally present themselves to any mind as the most suitable. But the way in which each part of each festival is fitted into each other, and the events which they originally commemorated, even the corruptions which afterwards crept in, are so absolutely and evidently Jewish, that it would be scarcely worth while to seek to prove them to be so.

As regarded the length of each feast, the great Spring and Autumn Festivals (Feast of Unleavened Bread and Feast of Tabernacles) each lasted seven days, while the Feast of Weeks occupied only one day. Allied with the three great feasts, though their very opposite—a fast—is the great Day of Atonement, observed up to the present day as strictly and as solemnly as ever by all Jews in every part of the world. It was also in the seventh month, and preceded the great Feast of Tabernacles, the most joyful and most largely attended of all the sacred festivals; and which fittingly was at what the Jew regarded as the close of the agricultural year, when reaping and harvest were at an end, and the deadness that succeeds the busiest time was at hand.

Such were the four great solemnities of the Israelitish nation as laid down in the Pentateuch. We are now in a position to examine each festival or feast separately, and to mark their distinctive features, and the teaching they were to convey to the nation at large, and to the Christian Church after their national aspect had passed away.

CHAPTER III.

The Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread.

THE sacred year began with the month Nisan, the only one to which the Pentateuch gives another name—Abib, the ‘ear-month’ (of corn). In it fell the first of the three great feasts: the Passover day, followed as it immediately was by the seven days’ Feast of Unleavened Bread (*Mazzoth*), with its two holy Sabbath days of festival.

These two festivals, closely connected as they were, and in Jewish history forming one continuous solemnity, were quite distinct in their inception. The word *Passover* is an almost literal translation of the Hebrew name *Pesach*, which signifies ‘to pass over,’ in the sense of sparing. As we first read of it in the Bible, it was commanded by God to the children of Israel while in the land of Egypt, and therefore before such things as a central Sanctuary and a priesthood had come into existence. The occasion of its institution is well-known: The firstborn of Egypt were to be destroyed, to force Pharaoh to let Israel go; but as the two nations were dwelling side by side, in order to make a distinction between them, the head of each Israelitish household was bidden, on the tenth of the month Nisan, to select a lamb, which on the fourteenth was to be slain, some of the blood taken, and sprinkled on the lintel and sideposts, and the lamb itself eaten roasted whole, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs; and as this plague on Egypt would produce the desired effect on Pharaoh, who would thrust them out, they were to eat it all equipped for the journey, with loins girded, shoes on the feet, staff in the hand, in haste. Such was

the original command given to Moses, and by him to the elders of the people.

STARTING-POINT OF NEW NATIONAL LIFE.

Here it must first be borne in mind, that the command is the only one given to Israel while in Egypt, and so must stand as the first positive recognition by God of the race as a nation. Rightly, then, the ordinance is prefaced with a doing away of the old time, and made the starting-point of a new cycle of time: 'this month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.'¹ From this point onwards, then, a new life has begun for Israel, and the beginning of this new life, and the circumstances connected with this beginning, are what must never be forgotten. Israel is in bondage in Egypt, the afflictions of Egypt are bitter to bear, he groans by reason of the bondage, and his great King, not content with easing him from his present troubles, lifts him up out of the mire, sets his feet upon a rock, and establishes his goings. Surely tradition was right in putting the first Passover night among the four great Nights of Memorial.

The feast was thus purely *national*. Of all the feasts of the Jews, the Passover was *the* feast which made a broad line of separation between Israel and every other people in the world. For no outsider could join in it, or take any part in it whatsoever. One thing alone could enable even a Jew to share in this feast: the being circumcised. 'There shall no alien eat thereof,' 'no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.' . . . 'every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof.'² That is, if a stranger, or a foreign slave, wished to share in the Paschal meal, he could only do so by taking upon him what the Rabbis called 'the yoke of the Covenant'—by submitting to the obligations of the children of Israel before he could enjoy their privileges. After being cir-

¹ Exod. xii. 2.

² See Exod. xii. 43-49.

cumcised, he would be no longer an alien, but part of the people of the covenant, and nothing more could there be to prevent his being treated in all respects as they were.

A FAMILY OBSERVANCE ; TRANSFERRED TO THE SANCTUARY.

In the third place, at any rate originally, the Passover, that is, the Paschal meal, was altogether a *family* solemnity. It was instituted, indeed, in a time when there was not a common centre for the people, when each suffered apart, and hoped apart. So the father, the head of the household, was in Egypt the sacrificing priest ; he slew the lamb, sprinkled its blood on his own doorposts and lintel, and ate the sacrificial meal with his own family. In the later history this part was, it is true, modified. Israel, the kingdom of priests, trembled below Mount Sinai at the voice of God, and prayed that some intermediary might speak to them the Great Words, lest they should die. Their prayer was granted, and the priest-tribe of Levi in the future was the channel of the Divine to the people. But with their priesthood the people lost also some of their privileges. A central Sanctuary being raised, each separate dwelling ceased to be worthy of being the altar whereon the Paschal lamb was slain ; and so we find that already in the wilderness the males are bidden to appear before the Lord in the Sanctuary on the Passover day ; and it was there, and by the priests, that the ceremony of killing the Paschal lambs for each household was gone through.

Yet even then the feast was a purely family one. Each family ate it by itself, girt, and as though ready for a journey, with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. So much indeed was this the case, that where one family was not large enough to make up the Paschal meal, it was ordained that the neighbouring family should be called in to swell the number, until it was large enough. Tradition set down ten as the fitting number.

Further, it was not only fitting to kill the Passover in the Sanctuary, but it was utterly unlawful to kill it anywhere else, when once the family power of sacrificing had passed into

other hands. So we read,¹ 'Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee: but at the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose to cause His name to dwell in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt.' Jerusalem was, then, in the later history of Israel, the city wherein the Passover was to be killed and eaten; and it is on record, in the Gospels as well as in Jewish writings, that the people of Jerusalem were accustomed, at any rate the more wealthy among them, to have a 'guest-chamber' ready and prepared at Passover time, for the convenience of stranger Jews who came up to the feast. Such a 'guest-chamber,'² large, upper, and furnished, was lent to Jesus and His disciples for the last Passover, whereat He was Himself that Paschal Lamb which, as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews has it, was offered 'once for all.' Josephus, indeed, has it, that the number of Jews who came from all parts of the world to the Passover at Jerusalem was so large that it was impossible to find accommodation for them all within the city, but that they were obliged to camp round it, and eat the Paschal lamb under tents.³ A little of this story must be modified, no doubt; still, there is abundant evidence that even in Herodian times the Paschal feast was a very festive and most busy time in Jerusalem, although the favourite feast to come up to was not the Passover, but the Feast of Tabernacles.

TRUE GROUND OF THE PASSOVER.

The reason and ground of the Passover, which feast was to be observed to all time, is not, that the firstborn of Egypt were slain and the firstborn of Israel spared, nor yet that the lamb had served as a mark of protection once to the dwellings of Israel, and so should be remembered every year; but that with the first Passover began Israel's existence as a nation. From that moment the old covenant, made centuries before with

¹ Deut. xvi. 5, etc.

² Mark xiv. 14, 15, etc.

³ *B. J.* ii. 14, 3; vi. 9, 3, *afui* Keil.

Abraham, was renewed; and out of the bondage and evil odour of Egypt the people emerged into a new life and new relationship to God. It would not have been worthy of such a great nation to hold a perpetual feast in memory of the misfortunes that had overtaken another nation; but especially would it have been unworthy of the Deity who commanded the feast to be observed. Indeed, the stress which is laid upon the purely *national* side of the feast: for 'in the month of Abib the Lord thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night,' 'that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life,' would be amply sufficient proof of this, even though, as will be shown, there is no need of such demonstration. For, the services appointed for the Passover, the materials of the meal itself, with the accompanying circumstances (and it must be remembered that to the Jew it was the symbolic which appealed far more than the verbal and literal), give us a most clear account of everything the Israelite of the time of Moses was expected to understand about the Passover. The lamb, the 'Pascha,' was undoubtedly a sacrifice, although the altar was wanting on which it should be consumed, there was no oblation of fat, nor, originally, any priestly interference. Yet it *was* an offering—as divines have it, not a *korban*, gift, but a *tzebach*, sacrifice, partaking of the nature both of the sin offering—since the blood sprinkled on the doorposts and lintel covered and protected the family in the person of its head and representative—and of the peace offering, since the slaying of the sacrifice was followed by what was really a sacrificial meal. Thus, the two ideas of reconciliation and atonement ran side by side with that of communion and fellowship with God; and so it is that the Great Paschal Lamb, once as a sin offering presented before God for the sins of the whole world, could yet, as peace offering, give the same Body and Blood which could never again be offered as sin offering, as a token of that communion and sacrament which is perpetual, and whereof He made His disciples fellow-partakers.

Further, the manner in which the lamb was to be prepared showed its sacrificial character. It must not be eaten raw, nor sodden at all with water, but 'roast with fire'—not even in an oven. The reasons for this command were, first, that neither should any foreign element be mixed with the sacrifice—no water, which might contain something to affect the lamb, but roast with fire, that the sacrificial fat, if it dropped off in roasting, might be consumed by the fire. The whole animal was to be roasted: head, legs, and inwards included, although undoubtedly the last would be cleaned first. No bone should be broken, for the sacrifice was to be entire and perfect; nor might any of the flesh be carried outside the house, so as to share what was intended for one family only with some other family. So sacred, indeed, was the lamb, that nothing of it might remain over until the morning, since it was to serve for a single meal, and might not be used for any other, 'that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire'—put it beyond the reach of any profane hand. The time for slaying the lamb, 'between the two evenings,' was a point in dispute in Rabbinic times; but it would appear that the custom in the Temple at the time of Josephus was to slay the lambs between three and six p.m., the period when the sun is approaching the west, down to the time when he actually sets.

The lamb, which was eaten in haste, 'with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand'—to show readiness for and expectation of the coming deliverance¹—was eaten with 'bitter herbs,' thought to be either wild endive, bitter lettuce, or chicory, not so as to form a pleasant addition to the lamb, but to give it more flavour, as also to remind them of the 'bitterness' of the bondage in Egypt, out of which they were being delivered. The other food commanded was 'unleavened bread'—'cakes' in the

¹ These signs of preparation for a journey seem to have been discontinued after Israel had reached the Land of Promise. See Dr. Edersheim's *Temple*, p. 201.

first Passover, when, through the haste with which they were 'thrust' out, they had not time to bake their bread, but 'took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders.' The unleavened bread not only signified this haste, and the 'bread of affliction' untempered, which they had been made to eat in Egypt; but as leaven in the Old Testament economy stood as the symbol for corruption and sin, it symbolized what the apostle calls the purging out of the old leaven, the leaving behind of all the stain of Egypt which had corrupted them, a shaking off of all the past life, and a new beginning. It was no matter of sadness, no punishment, the leaving of the old leaven; but as in Egypt, so in after times, on the evening of the 14th Nisan, each Jewish household started afresh, so to speak, and renewed the covenant which had been made with the fathers in the day they came out of Egypt.

SUBSEQUENT ADDITIONS TO THE RITUAL.

Later custom added to the Paschal meal four cups of wine, over each of which a benediction was spoken. The third cup is that which was taken to make the basis of that at the Lord's Supper, preceded as it immediately was by the washing of hands: 'the cup after supper,' the 'cup of benediction.' Thus what had crept in as completing the outline marked out by the Mosaic law, was made a symbol and a sacrament to the Christian Church by the great Paschal Lamb, whose Body, uncorrupted and untainted by sin, was the true Bread which came down from heaven, and which would give life to the whole world.

Though only the males of Israel were *obliged* to keep this feast, it very soon became customary for women to do so also, and, in fact, many of the Jewish authorities pronounced it to be actually binding on them. There was a further obligation laid on every Israelite who should come up to the Sanctuary to keep the Passover: 'none shall appear before Me empty.' Each Israelite, then, must bring his gift, this being the fitting

Oriental way of approach to anyone in power. This rule held good for all the feasts, or, indeed, for any case when approach to God was desired.

SOME HISTORICAL PASSOVERS.

Several Passovers of note are mentioned in the Old Testament; indeed, this Feast, as being the most purely national, would naturally be the one on which most stress would be laid by each zealous reformer. Within the land of Canaan the first Passover was held by Joshua at Gilgal,¹ when all the Israelites who had not been circumcised during the wanderings in the Sinai Peninsula were admitted into the Covenant. After this Passover the daily supply of manna ceased: 'neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year'—the land so long promised at last was theirs.

The next noted Passover as an era of reformation was that held by King Hezekiah. He was obliged to hold it in the second month of the year, 'because the priests had not sanctified themselves in sufficient number, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem.' Even then there were several who had not observed all the formalities enacted in the Law. But, with a wise and noble liberality, the king regarded the spirit of worship as a greater thing than ritual; God Himself approving His servant's course. Notwithstanding therefore these departures from the law in point of time and ceremonial the summing up of this Passover was one of especial solemnity and gladness, which is thus given in the words of the chronicler: 'their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to His holy habitation, even unto heaven.'²

King Josiah likewise kept a solemn Passover, of which it is said: 'There was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did any of the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept.'³

But even the solemnity of the Passover observed by the re-

¹ Josh. v.

² 2 Chron. xxx.

³ 2 Chron. xxxv.

turned Jews under Ezra¹ pales in comparison with the great New Testament Passover. From that day the Passover as sin offering ceased to exist; as peace offering, it is an eternal sacrifice. For 'Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.'²

FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD.

Immediately upon the Passover, the family feast and sacrifice, followed the Feast of Unleavened Bread (*chag mazzoth*, from mazzah, sweetness = unleavened). It lasted seven days, from 15-21 Nisan, the first and the seventh days being specially holy.³ During these seven days no leaven was to be eaten, nor seen within the dwellings of any Israelite, so as to mark still more emphatically the difference between the old life and the new. But the great ceremony of the Mazzoth Feast was the presentation of the Omer, before which none of the new harvest might be eaten as food by any of the people. The day appointed for this ceremony was 'the morrow after the Sabbath,' *i.e.*, after the first Sabbath-like day of the feast, and therefore on the second day, the 16th Nisan. The Omer was accompanied by a 'wave-sheaf,' of the first-fruits of the harvest, as a mark of the dedication of the harvest to God. The sheaf was of barley, the barley-harvest being the earliest in Palestine, the wheat-harvest following some months later. The 'omer' presented on the 16th Nisan was of fresh ears, the grains of which were rubbed and powdered, then sifted seven times, till an omer of the finest flour was left (omer = one tenth of an ephah); but as this was the day of thanksgiving for the coming harvest, the 'omer' was increased to two, which was mingled with oil and accompanied by a drink offering like an ordinary meat offering. At the same time, a burnt offering of a he-lamb was brought; while on all the seven days of the Feast the customary burnt

¹ Ezra vi. 19-22.

² 1 Cor. v. 7-8.

³ See Lev. xxiii.

offerings for festivals were brought : 'two young bullocks, and one ram, and seven he-lambs of the first year : they shall be unto you without blemish : and their meat offering, fine flour mingled with oil' 'and one he-goat for a sin offering, to make atonement for you,' in addition to the daily morning and evening sacrifice. This service was for all the days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread ; the second day being only distinguished by the waving of the barley-sheaf and the presentation of the omer.

Politically and religiously, then, the Passover marked the new beginning in Israel's history, as it does that of the Christian Church. For on it the true Paschal Lamb, whose blood covered all sins, and whose flesh was the food of the family of God, was slain, 'without the camp,' a true sin and peace offering. And as joy and thanksgiving were the leading thoughts in the mind of the Jew on the first of his Feasts, so does Easter in the Christian Church bring joy ; and as on the second day of the Feast, the Sunday of that Feast, the first fruits of the coming harvest were waved before the Lord, so on that day 'Christ rose from the dead, and became the first fruits of them that slept.'

CHAPTER IV.

The Feast of Weeks.

THE second great Feast in the Jewish sacred year—for we must regard the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread as forming one festival—fell in the third month of the year, Sivan, and so in the middle of summer. Its time is thus fixed,¹ ‘And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave-offering (*i.e.*, from the second day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread); seven Sabbaths shall there be complete; even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days.’ That is, from the time of the offering of the Omer; but whether from that day or from the end of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was a matter of grave dispute, some maintaining that it was to be reckoned from the first day of that Feast, others when the Feast was completed. At any rate, forty-nine days, a week of Sabbaths, were to be counted; and on the day after, the fiftieth day, the Summer Festival was to be held, which accordingly received from its place in the Calendar the name of ‘Feast of Weeks,’ *i.e.*, $7 \times 7 = 49$ days after the Passover Feast.

OTHER NAMES OF THE FEAST.

But this is not the only name given to this Feast. It was also *chag haqqatzir*, the ‘Feast of Harvest,’ Exod. xxiii. 16, since the period of which it was the completion and crown; the weeks before it, and after the Feast of Passover, were the

¹ Lev. xxiii. 15. etc.

days of harvest, days of rejoicing and gladness, which the later Christian Church afterwards kept as days of especial holiness. With the completion of the barley-harvest, which in Palestine precedes the wheat-harvest, came the consecration of the wheat-harvest, which was the event distinguishing the Feast of Harvest from both the others. A kindred name to this is given in Numb. xxviii. 26, 'the day of the first fruits,' explained as being the day 'when ye offer a new meat offering unto the Lord in your feast of weeks.' Josephus again speaks of this feast as *atzereth*, 'end-feast,' meaning the Feast which ended that of Passover, and again 'Pentecost,' *i.e.*, 'fiftieth' day. But its most common designation, and that which seems most characteristic, is 'Feast of Weeks.'

INTENTION OF THE FEAST.

As regarded Israel viewed collectively, it was no doubt originally intended to be a purely agricultural high-day, a day of thanksgiving for the abundant harvest, and of consecrating to God of the fruits of the earth. This feeling of joy for the visible returns of labour is, of course, common to all ages and peoples, and it was too obvious an opportunity for a wise lawgiver to be allowed to pass. So the beginning of harvest was marked by the Feast of Passover, the middle of it by the Feast of Weeks, while the completion, the ingathering of the fruits, was marked by the joyous Feast of Tabernacles.

In after ages, when the days of decline had come, and Israel needed to be constantly reminded, not only to remember God in the individual life of each harvest, but as a nation and as the people of God, the teachers of the people, remembering that it was in the third month that the Mighty Voice was heard from Sinai, and the Law given to Israel below, associated this giving of the law with the Feast of Weeks, and named it the Feast of the Giving of the Law. Fitting enough this was, not only on account of the probable coincidence of time, but because the joy of harvest to the outward man would be but small in comparison with the delight

that law of God would be to the inner man. Whether, then, we look upon the Feast of Weeks as a national rejoicing for temporal good, or as a rejoicing for spiritual gifts, it is equally valuable and instructive to the modern Church.

To the Church, indeed, it has a still greater value. For it was on this day, while the disciples at Jerusalem were still awaiting the promise of the Father, assembled close to the Temple, as of old the Israelites were gathered around Sinai, the sound of a mighty rushing wind was heard, and the Holy Spirit, in perceptible form, descended on each of them. Thus Pentecost, Whitsunday, the Feast of Weeks, the birthday of Israel's law and order, became what writers so aptly term it, the birthday of the Church, the epoch from which the Church received its life; the apostles, boldness to proclaim their message; and when, from their loosened tongues, their 'sound went into all lands, and their words to the end of the world.' Once before, at Babel, confusion of tongues had separated the whole world; now, at Pentecost, multitudes of tongues brought all the world together, for 'in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free.'

RITUAL OF THE FEAST.

According to the Pentateuch, the Feast of Weeks was only to last one day, which day was to be a 'holy convocation,' a Sabbath among days. Though consisting only of one day, it was to be attended by all males in Israel, none of whom were to appear empty-handed, but to come furnished with free-will offerings. It may be that those strangers who came up to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover often made it a practice to stay from that Feast in the Holy City until after the Feast of Pentecost; but there is no doubt that for the great mass of the people this arrangement would be fraught with great inconvenience, as the harvest-time would be that period when their presence at home would be most required. The Feast Day opened, as usual, with the morning sacrifice, with the duties thereon attending, after which took place what was the

great event of the Feast, the 'new meat offering.' This 'new meat offering' consisted of 'two wave-loaves,' loaves made of finely-sifted and carefully prepared wheat-meal, the quantity taken being two-tenths of an ephah; and, unlike the Passover cakes, they were to be leavened, since they represented; not a sacrifice, but the consecration of the daily bread; as sufficient harvest had now been reaped to permit of the new wheat being ground and prepared for food, and so it befitted Israel to bring into the Sanctuary the best and earliest of their food. The leaven in the bread—not 'cakes,' but bread, ordered by tradition to be seven handbreaths long, four broad, and four thick—did not stand for sin or corruption, but shadowed forth that it must be the usual bread that was offered, that in their everyday life they were, equally with their festive life, to have their Great King always before their minds. But as sin must in truth mingle with all things in this world, even though consecrated to God, in addition, on the Feast of Weeks, were to be brought, as burnt offering, 'for a sweet savour unto the Lord,' 'two young bullocks, one ram, seven he-lambs of the first year; and their meat offering, fine flour mingled with oil, threethird parts for each bullock, two-tenth parts for the one ram, a several tenth part for every lamb of the seven lambs,' 'and two he-lambs of the first year for a peace offering;' and, though as marking the lesser place the feeling of guilt held in the Feast, in a much smaller degree, 'one he-goat, to make atonement for you.' These sacrifices, together with the two wave-loaves, which after being duly waved and presented before the Lord, together with the two lambs which formed the peace offering, were given to the priests, complete the ritual of the Feast of Pentecost.

PENTECOST AND THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

To the Christian Church, of course, the anniversary of the descent of the Holy Ghost, and of the giving of the 'law of liberty,' is a far greater day than the ancient Feast of Weeks ever was to the Jewish people. True, the time measured from

when 'thou beginnest to put the sickle to the standing corn,' must have reminded them of the great harvest to be reaped in the end of the world, when the King Messiah would be the first to thrust His sickle in. But thoughts of that future must have been mainly swallowed up in the rejoicing of the present: 'Thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are in the midst of thee, in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to cause His name to dwell there.' Truly, there was cause of rejoicing as regarded the past, when he remembered 'that thou wast a bondman in Egypt;' as regarded the present, when he was keeping 'the Feast of Weeks unto the Lord thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give, according as the Lord thy God blesseth thee;' and likewise as regarded the future, for these poor ones helped, and sent on their way rejoicing, the promise would be his: 'He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord, and his good deed will He pay him again.'

CHAPTER V.

The Great Yearly Fast: The Day of Atonement.

FASTING IN DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS.

IT adds little or nothing to adverse criticism, nor does it detract in the least from the importance or significance of the fact, to admit that among all nations of antiquity fasting and self-abasement were considered ways of approaching the Deity which would be specially pleasing to Him. Such a thing as a day of public fasting and humiliation we would naturally expect to find among the Jews, that nation which, though not taken out of the world, was yet kept from the evil that was in it. But fasting and humiliation to the other nations of the world were the end and aim of their religion, often the highest virtue, to which only the extremely holy could hope to attain. Among the Jewish people, on the other hand, fasting was not confined to the few, to be made use of when and how they thought fitting, but was ordained for the whole nation; on one particular day, in one particular place, and then only served as a manner of preparing the people for the reconciliation which was effected through the person of one man, who acted as representative alike of God and of his fellow-countrymen.

The points of contact, then, between the Jewish day of fasting and those incorporated into other religions are but few. In both cases the feeling prompting the deed was that of sin; but whereas in heathenism each man only strove to expiate his *own* guilt, the Jewish faith contemplated the expiation of a whole nation, and not only of a nation, but of a religion itself—a thing far beyond the imagination of any Gentile of those days.

RESERVE IN APPROACHING THE HOLY OF HOLIES.

Originally the feeling of unworthiness to approach the most holy things of God seems to have arisen in the breast of Aaron after the terrible warning given the priesthood by the death of Nadab and Abihu. Whatever the cause of their death, whether drunkenness or otherwise, this much is certain, that they presumptuously put forth their hand to what was holy. The natural rebound from presumption was, of course, fear in the minds of their fathers and brothers: witness Aaron's excuses to Moses for not having eaten his share of the sacrifice: 'Behold this day have they offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the Lord; and there have befallen me such things as these; and if I had eaten the sin offering to-day, would it have been well-pleasing in the sight of the Lord?' In view of these facts, we are scarcely surprised to find that the ritual for the Day of Atonement is prefaced by these words: 'The Lord spake unto Moses, after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they drew near before the Lord, and died Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil, before the mercy-seat which is upon the ark; that he die not.'¹

A great relief indeed must it have been to Aaron, the knowledge that only at prescribed times he was expected to appear in the very presence of God, the Being who was too pure to behold iniquity; good, also, that when the priest did enter the holiest he did not go on his own account alone, but as representative of the people of God, and therefore sheltered by what he carried with him.

RITUAL OF THE DAY.

The day appointed for this solemn fast is usually known to us by the name of the Day of Atonement, but called by the Jews *Yom hakkippurim*, day of atonements (*dies expiationum*), or more simply *Yoma*, the day. Curiously enough, if we except

¹ Lev. xvi. 2.

the places where it is prescribed in the Pentateuch code, there is no mention, historically, of the Day of Atonement throughout the whole Old Testament. It has, however, been agreed, even by adverse critics, that this circumstance in no way militates against the fact that during those centuries it was actually observed. Those who look upon the Pentateuch code as a priestly fabrication, invented in later ages for the self-glorification of that class, will freely admit as genuine a ceremonial in which the priesthood alone is first and foremost. And more sober critics, from internal evidence, have adjudged it an integral part of a most beautiful system of ritual. Ezekiel, indeed, in his vision of the future Temple and its services, makes two days of atonement, one for the Sanctuary, and one for 'every one that erreth, and for him that is simple,' on the first and on the seventh days of the first month. But so much of other parts of the ritual is omitted, and so much altered in the prophetic vision, that we may not base history upon it. The first mention, then, of the Day of Atonement is to be found in Ecclus. i. 5, where the bearing of Sim'on the Just on that day is described. From that time forward we have more certain accounts of the Day of Atonement, such as in Acts xxvii. 9, it being looked upon as marking the beginning of a season of the year, when travelling was dangerous.

Lev. xvi. appoints that the Day for Atonement, a day holy above all other days, a *sabbath sabbathon*, which the Revisers translate 'a Sabbath of solemn rest,' was to be, to all generations, 'a statute for ever,' and that on the tenth day of the seventh month (Tishri). It was incumbent on all Israel to keep this day, with this dreadful penalty attached to the non-fulfilment of the precept: 'Whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from his people. And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any manner of work in that same day, that soul will I destroy from among his people. Ye shall do no manner of work: it is a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.'¹

¹ Lev. xxiii. 26-32.

Not only was it necessary for the people to diligently observe this fast; this was the only day of all the year when it was absolutely necessary that the high priest should be present in person, and conduct all the services of the day himself. On any other day of the year, whether festive or otherwise, a substitute might act for him; but on the Day of Atonement none other would suffice. No wonder it was '*the Day*' to the Jewish nation.

Later tradition laid it down that the high priest must carefully fit himself for a long period beforehand, for the work he was to do on the Day. We are told that for seven days before he had to occupy a chamber built for the purpose within the Temple precincts, to study nothing but his duties for the great day; and that the night before the tenth of Tishri, no sleep was permitted him. The day, indeed, began on the evening of the ninth of Tishri, but the ritual about to be described would take place on the morning of the tenth.

The services began with the usual morning sacrifices, preceded and followed by the customary lustrations on the part of the priests. After this, according to some, the prescribed sacrifices for a feast day, 'one young bullock, one ram, seven he-lambs of the first year,' with their meat and drink offerings, was brought; according to others, this was offered after the distinctive service of the day had been performed, and immediately before the evening sacrifice.¹ Taking the latter as the more probable order of events, we next find that the high priest, laying aside his 'garments of glory,' arrayed himself in white garments: 'the holy linen coat, the linen breeches upon his flesh, girded with the linen girdle, and attired with the linen mitre:' the garments symbolising purity of body, not mourning; white, the emblem of purity; but not priestly garments, since the coloured girdle was wanting. The putting on of these garments was preceded by bathing.

For, in his own person, Aaron, or the high priest, whoever he might be, stood for the whole priesthood, which equally with

¹ Comp. Numb. xxix. 7-11.

the children of Israel required yearly cleansing and atonement. For himself, and for the priesthood, the high priest was now to bring into the Sanctuary 'a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering.' For the children of Israel, on the other hand, to atone for them, he was to take 'two he-goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.' First, the high priest laid his hands on the bullock, which was for a sin offering for the priesthood, 'presenting' it, and, as afterwards practised in the Temple, confessing over it for himself and his brethren. He then left the animal to be sacrificed later on in the service. After this, the priest took the two goats, and placing them at the entrance to the Tabernacle, cast lots upon them; a ceremony most elaborately performed in later days. The lots were: 'one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for Azazel.'

This term, Azazel,¹ has been a *crux* from the earliest days even to now. The Revisers have put 'dismissal' in the margin, and this is undoubtedly a very widely received explanation of the term. According to this view, one goat was chosen for sacrifice, the other to be sent away. But another view, and one which has found still more favour among modern commentators, has it, that Azazel is the name of a demon, and here stands as equivalent for Satan, whose habitation was supposed to be in the wilderness, and to whom, as to the original source of all sin, the goat bearing the sins of the congregation was to be sent. These critics argue that the contrast between Jehovah on the one side, and Azazel on the other, absolutely requires this interpretation. Yet, on the other hand, it seems passing strange that here only should we have an allusion, throughout the whole Pentateuch, to the world-wide superstition that wildernesses and lonely places are the haunts of evil spirits. Be it then as it may, whether we take Azazel as meaning the Spirit of Evil as opposed to the Spirit of Good, or that the goat was 'for complete sending away' (a reduplicated, or strengthened,

¹ 'Scapegoat' as in the A.V. is at once an incorrect and an inadequate translation.

form connected with the Hebrew verb *azal*), certain it is that no lowering superstition connected itself in any way with this most solemn service.

The goat on which the lot fell 'for Jehovah,' was first presented before Him, confession being made over it for the children of Israel. Then the goat for Azazel was set by itself, ready to perform its part in the service later on. Next, the bullock for the priests' sin offering was again confessed over, and then slain; since the high priest could avail nothing as intercessor for the people till he himself, and the priesthood through him, had been reconciled to God. The animal having been slain, the high priest, having given some of its blood in a basin to another priest to hold, took a 'censer full of coals of fire from off the altar,' *i.e.*, the Great Altar of Burnt Offering, and filling his hands with finely powdered incense, brought these things within the veil, immediately putting the incense, by shaking it out of a spoon, on to the glowing coals of the censer, which again he placed upon the ark (afterwards, in the second Temple, on the stone which occupied the place where the Ark formerly stood), so that a thick cloud of incense might rise up and cover him before the Lord, 'that he die not.' Thus with the cloud of incense he shrouded the holy presence of God, which no human eye could look on, and live. Perhaps there may also be here some reference to the sweet 'prayers of the saints,' the fitting way of approach to God.

Then the high priest, returning with reverent step backwards to the Great Altar, took the blood of the bullock, and again entering the Most Holy Place, sprinkled it, with his finger, upon the east (front) side of the mercy-seat seven times, as an atonement for the priesthood. After that, having returned to the Great Altar of burnt offering, he killed the goat which had been chosen 'for Jehovah,' for the people, and going once more into the Holiest, sprinkled the blood on and before the mercy-seat: 'and he shall make atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleannesses of the children of Israel, and because of all their transgressions, even all their sins.' This

done, and during the time he was within the Holiest Place, 'there shall be no man in the tent of meeting when he goeth in to make atonement,' the high priest, with the blood of both bullock and goat that was left, was to make atonement for the Altar of Incense, by putting blood on the horns, and sprinkling the altar itself with blood seven times, after which the remainder of the blood was to be poured out at the base of the Altar of Burnt Offering. Then the high priest, returning to the outer court, presented the live goat, and laying both his hands upon its head, confessed 'over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, even all their sins; and he shall put them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a man that is in readiness into the wilderness.' That is, confessing and laying upon the scapegoat all the evil of Israel, the high priest, as in the ritual for the cleansing of the leper the officiating priest set free the one bird to bear far away with it the disease and its curse, so the curse and blight of sin was borne by the scapegoat 'unto a solitary land,' where, according to the Pentateuch, the goat for Azazel was to be left to find its own end. Later observance, however, deeming the goat too awful and mysterious to be left to wander about with its burden of a nation's sin, ordered it, that the goat should be taken to a steep incline, known by the name of *Zuk*, and there hurled down the precipice. This done, he that led the goat away for Azazel having communicated the fact to assembled Israel, must first wash his clothes, and then bathe, before he could again come into the camp.

The great sin offering thus consisted of two parts in their combined significance, pointing to the One great Sacrifice. The first victim symbolized the *bearing* of sin, in the death which is its penalty; the second, the bearing *away* of sin, its complete dismissal, removed from God's Israel for ever.

When intimation had been given that the goat was really 'sent away,' the high priest, divesting himself of his white garments, and again bathing himself (tradition had it, that he was to bathe himself five times during the services on this day),

put on his ordinary glorious garments, and proceeded to offer the two burnt offerings, one for himself and the priesthood, and the other for the people. After this, the carcasses of the bullock and the goat, whose blood had been brought into the Most Holy Place, were to be carried forth to the appointed place without the camp, and there burnt with fire, those who performed this office being obliged to wash their clothes and bathe their flesh before they could again come into the camp. This, with the evening sacrifice, completed the ritual of the day.

MODERN OBSERVANCE OF THE DAY.

The Day of Atonement to the Jews of our time is no light matter. Neither food nor drink may touch the lips of any Jew during its hours. Equally strict was it in ancient times; it was, indeed, a day on which to 'afflict the soul.' Once every year must the Israelite seek and find atonement, though in degenerate times the complaint have been uttered: 'Behold, in the day of your fast ye find your own pleasure, and exact all your labours. Behold, ye fast for strife and contention, and to smite with the fist of wickedness; ye fast not this day so as to make your voice to be heard on high. Is such the fast that I have chosen? the day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a rush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?' Rather did the prophet call to mind the true beauty and meaning of the Great Day to erring Israel, as he had done that of the Sabbath Day, when he continued: 'Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?'¹ For the prophet perceived, indeed, that fasting was

¹ Isa. lviii. 3-7.

but an aid to holiness, not the way ; and that it was only of value when accompanied by righteous deeds, not to be seen or known of men.

DEEPEST MEANING OF THE ORDINANCE.

And there was a still deeper meaning in the Day of Atonement, more valuable to the world at large than its moral and social aspect -- the doing good to the brother because a brother ; and this is what the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews puts forward. To him the high priest entering only once a year into the Holiest, and then only by virtue of the blood he carried with him, signified, that the way into the Holiest for all was not yet made manifest ; but that Christ, a High Priest of good things to come, having once entered, once for all, by virtue of His own blood, into the Holy of Holies, He remains there, the Mediator of the new covenant sealed by His own blood, having given us, the common herd, who might not dare to enter even the Holy Place, 'boldness to enter,' by the way which He dedicated for us a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh. No more need, then, is there for having 'a remembrance of sins year by year,' for 'by one offering He (Christ) hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,' and 'where remission of these [sins and iniquities] is, there is no more offering for sin.'¹

¹ Hebrews x. 3, 14, 18.

CHAPTER VI.

The Feast of Tabernacles.

INGATHERING.

THE most joyous season of the whole year to a people whose wealth was furnished by the soil, was of course the time when, all risks and dangers of loss past, came the ingathering of the fruits of the earth: harvest ended, summer dying, and the rich vines yielding their grapes. Such a time in Palestine fell in the seventh month (Tishri), just after the Day of Atonement, and it was celebrated by a feast, which speedily became *the* Feast, the Feast of Ingathering, or as we more commonly call it now, the Feast of Tabernacles.

In very deed it was a perfect harvest-feast, such as has been celebrated among all agricultural nations of the world. The last Feast of the year, before the time of winter came, it was also the great Feast of the best month of the year, the Sabbath month, which had been heralded in with more than ordinary solemnity; in which the children of Israel had again reconciled themselves to their God; and from which atonement they had arisen as to a new life of consecration and service. A very suitable season this in which to rejoice before the Lord.

Five days, then, after the Day of Atonement, began the feast in which joy and thanksgiving were the principal elements. The Feast of Tabernacles was known among the Jews under the name of *Chag hassukkoth*, a phrase of which the English is a translation, although perhaps the term 'booths,' which the Revisers have placed in the margin of Lev. xxiii. 34, conveys the meaning more exactly. Exod. xxiii. 16, calls it *Chag ha-Asiph*, Feast of the Ingathering. These are the two most common

names, and they express in both cases its purely national meaning. The Feast of Ingathering was for joy only to the owners of the soil, the Jews; the Feast of Tabernacles commemorated past events in the national history, which could have no interest or importance for those who were not of the race.

HISTORICAL REMEMBRANCES.

The stress is laid in the ritual for the Feast on the element of joy, the keynote to the whole being 'ye shall rejoice before the Lord.' The reasons for this joy were twofold: first, they were to rejoice on account of the deliverance from Egypt, and in remembrance thereof, and of the way in which they had been led through the great and terrible wilderness, they were to dwell in booths (or tabernacles) during all the days of the feast. These, as might naturally be expected, since it was the 'Sabbath Feast,' were seven; but to the seven an eighth day, of ritual even more impressive than the others, was added. The second reason for joy was, that they had been brought into this good land, and enabled to reap and partake of its fruits, since the harvest then being celebrated was more especially the fruit and wine gathering.

The principal features characteristic of the Harvest Feast are as follows:—

When the people had come into the 'good land,' and had gathered in its fruits, from the threshingfloor and from the winepress, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, they were to meet, the whole nation, as represented more especially by the males of the community, 'in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose,' *i.e.*, in the central Sanctuary, and there keep the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, 'because the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy increase.'

DWELLING IN BOOTHS.

On the first day the whole people were to procure 'the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook;' the plants enumerated above

being generally supposed to be varieties of citron, wild or cultivated, and myrtle—and with these boughs they were bidden ‘rejoice before the Lord’ for seven days. Most probably these goodly boughs were meant for the adornment of the ‘booths,’ or ‘tabernacles,’ made out of branches of trees, in which the whole nation were to dwell during the days of the Feast, as token of their joy for the deliverance from Egypt; and in commemoration, though a joyful one, of the time when they dwelt in tents, and had no sure habitation, a feature of life which would seem even now to be often the custom in Palestine during the time of vintage. This dwelling in booths was to be ‘a statute for ever in your generations,’ and indeed gave its character to the whole Feast.

Even in later times, Jerusalem was green with booths during the Feast, as they were then erected on the flat housetops, and on every open space, and, in obedience to the command of rejoicing with branches of fragrant-smelling trees, the people went about bearing twisted branches of the various plants in their right and left hands. Most especially, though, was this the Feast of Rejoicing to the whole community, that is, to every born Israelite, for the outsider had no share in it—although tradition has it that all the nations of the world were remembered in the number of animals to be sacrificed. But it was so utterly and entirely bound up with the soil, that there seems no place in it for any wider or advanced view, at least to the Jew of the days of Moses.

‘All that are homeborn in Israel shall dwell in booths;’ the reason given being, ‘that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt.’ That is, he who alone had a right to the soil, and alone had cause for rejoicing at its fruitfulness. To the Christian Church, indeed, to whom the harvest brings thoughts of the end of the world, and of that great harvest wherein angels are the reapers, and where the great High Priest Himself puts in the sickle, the Feast of Tabernacles is a type yet unfulfilled, and the branches waved by

the worshippers may well stand, as it has been shown by more than one writer, for the palm branches of the saints who 'are coming out of the great tribulation.'

But even to the Jew himself no darker thought of pain or suffering marred his joy. The booths in which he dwelt were not meant to show him the frailty and transitoriness which is the lot of all things human, but rather the idea of safety and protection from storm and tempest, from foe and death. Such is the 'tabernacle' or booth of the Psalms and of the Prophets:

'For in the day of trouble He shall keep me secretly in
His pavilion:
In the covert of His tabernacle shall He hide me;
He shall lift me up upon a rock.
And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies
round about me;
And I will offer in His tabernacle sacrifices of joy.'¹

Or again:

'Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tent that shall not be removed, the stakes whereof shall never be plucked up, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.'²

A Feast to be kept was this all over the land; for it came into practice that those who could not come up to the central Sanctuary were to make the booths within their own boundaries, and attend the services of the Synagogue where it was not possible to join in those of the Temple.

SACRIFICES AT THE FEAST.

Besides the dwelling in booths, this Feast was distinguished by being that at which a very large number of sacrifices was offered, so that it might almost be called *the* Sacrificial Feast. These sacrifices began, on the first day of the Festival, with thirteen young bullocks, two rams, and fourteen he-lambs of

¹ Psa. xxvii. 5, 6.

² Isa. xxxiii. 20.

the first year, together with their corresponding meat offerings, and one he-goat for a sin offering—in addition, of course, to the ordinary daily sacrifices. Day by day as the Feast went on, the same sacrifices were brought; but each day one bullock was deducted, *i.e.*, on the second day twelve bullocks were offered; on the third, eleven; and so on, till on the seventh day only seven bullocks were brought; so that the whole number of bullocks offered during the Feast amounted to seventy, which according to later tradition was the number of nations in the world; and according to sacred symbolism is 7×10 , the sacred number multiplied by the number of perfection. For those who take an interest in such questions, this is a point worthy of notice. It should be added that once in seven years, in the year of release, the book of the Law, or some portion of it, was to be publicly read at the Feast of Tabernacles.¹

DAYS OF THE FEAST: THE 'GREAT DAY.'

The seven days of the Feast were very much like those of an ordinary Festival, save that the first day was one of 'holy convocation,' in which no servile work was to be done, the other six days being days of rejoicing and merry-making, of bringing free-will offerings, and praising the goodness of God the Giver. It would also seem that this was the season at which the best and ripest of the fruit and grapes was placed in a basket by the various offerers, and brought as a present to the Sanctuary.²

But by far the greatest day of the Feast in later times was the eighth day, about which as yet we have spoken little. The Feast would then really be practically over, for the sacrifices prescribed for it are those for an ordinary feast-day, such as we might expect to find for a new moon: one bullock, one ram,

¹ See Deut. xxxi. 10-13. Rabbinical tradition specifies as the parts to be read: Deut. i. 1-vi. 4; xi. 13-xvi. 22; xviii. 1-14; xxvii., xxviii. Comp. Neh. viii.

² Comp. Numb. xviii. 12 Deut. xxvi. 1-11.

seven he-lambs of the first year without blemish, with their meat offerings, and the he-goat for a sin offering. Yet it was the Sabbath day, so to speak, which closed the Feast, and was to be a solemn assembly, a day on which no servile work might be done, a fitting rest and close to the week's mirth. In later times a ninth day was added to the Feast, known as *Simchath hattorah* (Day of Rejoicing for the Law), since on the previous Sabbath the Lectionary of the Pentateuch ended, to begin again on the next Sabbath. Every third year, also, the Law was to be read to the nation by the priesthood.

LATER OBSERVANCES OF THE FESTIVAL.

The observances at the Feast of Tabernacles in later days—for example, in the days of Christ—do not come within our province. They consisted chiefly in the pouring out of water fetched from the Pool of Siloam on one or more days (authorities are divided on this point), of chanting the 'Hallelujah' Psalms, and probably Isaiah xii., of illuminating the Temple by night, etc., etc.¹ More important to us is the connection which Christ had with the Feast, and more lasting memories are those words which He uttered 'in the midst of the Feast,' and on 'the last day, the great day of the Feast,' words called forth by the pouring out of the water at the base of the great Altar: 'If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink.' To the Jews who thronged the Temple courts, that teaching, which they had heard during their Feast, was more than passing strange—it laid hold on them, at any rate for a short season, and held them convinced: 'This is of a truth the Prophet' 'This is the Christ' 'Never man so spake.' Yet to the rulers He was one who led astray, one of 'this multitude which knoweth not the law,' and so 'are accursed.' And thus the Light of the World shone only in darkness that comprehended Him not, and upon a people to whom the Feast of Tabernacles only brought thoughts of national pride and self-sufficiency. From the light missed

¹ See Dr. Eder'sheim's *Jewish Temple in the Days of Christ*.

and the water of life despised at that Feast of Tabernacles, it is good to turn to the future Feast, as seen by the prophet Zechariah, and as it is yet to be fulfilled in the case of, not Israel alone, but all the nations of the world :

‘And it shall come to pass, that everyone that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. . . . In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLY UNTO THE LORD.’¹

¹ Zech. xiv. 16, 20.

APPENDIX.



I. COMPARATIVE RELIGION.

IT has been repeatedly shown in the preceding pages that many of the Mosaic institutions had their counterpart, more or less exact, in the ceremonies or customs of heathen nations, especially in those of Egypt. Modern research has also brought to light a series of striking parallels between the ideas embodied in the religion of Israel and the beliefs expressed more or less dimly in other and earlier systems. The study of 'comparative religion' has already yielded large results in this direction, and the list of coincidences is still on the increase.

Some theorists on religious matters have been led by such facts to the conclusion that the Israelite ritual itself was but a *development*, to be accounted for by natural causes, and needing no supernatural revelation. Against such a conclusion we would warn our readers, as rash and ill-considered. It would, indeed, require much detail to show that no development hypothesis could possibly account for the Mosaic system. But the following points may be suggested as worthy of consideration.

1. We hold, on the authority of the Bible records, that there were early Divine revelations to our race, and that in the beliefs and usages of heathenism there are many vestiges, however broken and distorted, of this primæval religion. That an undue stress has been sometimes laid upon this point by the advocates of revelation may be fully conceded; but it cannot be wholly dismissed as without a bearing upon the

case. The 'broken lights' of a setting sun must not be mistaken for the indications of a dawning faith.

2. In regard to much that appears to be derived from an earlier heathenism, the general observation may be made, that the Divine method appears to be, to proceed upon the basis of already existing ideas and practices. 'The religious legislator does not invent an absolutely new system of rites and ordinances and beliefs. He takes what he finds, and amends, corrects, limits, and remoulds them to serve the higher purpose which he has in view. And the Divine Spirit, working always through human instrumentality and according to the laws which the Creator, has impressed on His creatures, follows the same course.' There is an *inspiration of selection*. 'Out of the rude systems of primitive society, growing up under the action of unconscious forces operating silently from age to age, the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of a human legislator, selects, modifies, and consecrates certain laws and ideas to be the fruitful seeds of a purer and more elevating religion.'¹

3. In the Mosaic system there is, superadded to all that seems kindred with religions of human origin, the one master-thought of HOLINESS. This thought, whether expressed in sacrifice, or pervading the ordinances for every-day life and conduct, or embodied in its highest form in the appointment and consecration of the priesthood, at once differentiates the Hebrew religion from all others. 'Ye shall be holy, for I Jehovah am holy;' 'I Jehovah do sanctify you.' The motto of the whole system was in the inscription upon Aaron's 'holy crown:' HOLINESS TO THE LORD. God Himself, so to speak, appropriates earth's common material, and renders it Divine.

4. Nor must the symbolic, and especially the typical significance of these ordinances be forgotten. As has been

¹ Review in the *Guardian*, October 22nd, 1890, of Dr. W. Robertson Smith's *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites*. See also Spencer's *De Legibus Hebræorum Ritualibus et earum Rationibus*.

shown throughout this book, every part of the system conveys a Divine meaning. And even more than this, the whole is typical of something yet to come. The proof is conclusive of a foresight nothing less than Divine. Outlines are given in the Law, to be filled up in the Gospel; 'patterns of things in the heavens,' to prepare for the heavenly reality; 'a shadow of good things to come,' to be watched and pondered until the things themselves should appear; 'the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.' Such is the chief distinction of the ceremonial law; such the irresistible proof, that the Mind by which it was framed had a distinct intention with regard to the ages to come, while it included the Present and the Future in its omniscient survey.

II. NEW TESTAMENT PRIESTHOOD AND SACRIFICE.

(See pp. 42, 57, 74, 154.)

It may be convenient here to bring together the chief New Testament passages which bear upon the priesthood and the sacrifices of the Christian Church, in subordination to the 'one offering' of 'the body of Jesus Christ once for all,' made by Himself as the great High Priest. To this sacrifice the whole Jewish ritual points, and our true commentary on Leviticus is the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The Sanctuary is the type of the Christian Church; and the 'Atonement for the Sanctuary' on the *Yom hakkipurim* represents the one act of expiation by which Christ has hallowed His Church for the offering of continual sacrifice to God. In this high service every Christian is a priest before Him. 'He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father.'¹ 'Ye,' writes the Apostle Peter, 'are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.'

¹ Rev. i. 6, R.V

And again: 'Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.'¹ To whom does St. Peter write this? 'To the elect . . . in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.' That is, the qualification and anointing grace which mark the priesthood of the Church, are the sprinkled blood, the sanctifying Spirit, and the obedient heart. Wherever these are found, we have God's chosen priest.

The existence of orders and offices in the Church² is to be explained in harmony with this central truth. Thus, when the Christian pastor is termed 'a priest,' the word *so used* is but an abbreviated derivation of 'presbyter' or 'elder,' and not 'hieicus,' the sacrificing priest of Scripture. This latter word is *never once* applied in the New Testament to the Church's ministry, as distinct from the whole body of believers. The French well expresses the distinction by the two words 'prêtre' and 'sacrificateur.'

What then are the sacrifices of the Christian sanctuary and priesthood? We may adopt Kurtz's division,³ and with regard to the three great ideas underlying the whole system of sacrifices, may remark, *first*, that EXPIATION is complete—'once for all'—never to be repeated or supplemented: 'one sacrifice for sins for ever.'⁴ *Secondly*, the thought of CONSECRATION inspires the whole Christian life. Thus the Apostle Paul writes to his brethren, 'I beseech you . . . to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, your reasonable service.'⁵ 'Your bodies'—the organs or instruments of your whole being—including all that you can say or do: 'a living sacrifice'—in so far superior to the slain bodies of animals that were brought into the Tabernacle: and 'a reasonable service'—or 'spiritual worship';⁶ the outward acts expressive of all that is deepest in our nature. So the joy of life becomes 'a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is,

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9. ² 1 Cor. xii. 28; Eph. iv. 11, 12. ³ See p. 75.

⁴ See R.V. Heb. x. 12; and note the punctuation.

⁵ Romans xii. 1.

⁶ *Ib.* R.V. marg.

the fruit of lips which make confession to His name'; and our acts of kindness to others are a *minchah*, a gift to God: 'To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.'¹ Again: 'Pure religion,' or *ritual*, for the Greek word employed denotes *sacrificial* service—'and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.' This, then, is the ritualism of Christianity—charity and purity. The third note of sacrifice is FELLOWSHIP, symbolized by the sacrificial meal. The Israelites who ate the sacrifices had 'communion with the altar.'² It was as if Jehovah Himself condescended to be present at the feast. So of the fellowship of the Christian Church. 'The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ? seeing that we who are many are one bread, one body: for we all partake of the one bread.' This is the symbol—the holy banquet which follows the great Sacrifice; an outward and visible sign of the sublime reality indicated by the words of Christ Himself: 'I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.'³ 'We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the Tabernacle.'⁴ The prerogatives of the ancient priesthood belong to the past: we have the antitype, the spiritual reality. In this our fellowship is no matter of reserved privilege: it is wide as the whole household of God.

¹ Heb. xiii. 15, 16.

³ Rev. iii. 20.

² See I Cor. x. 18.

⁴ Heb. xiii. 10.

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